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BY

Miss Wilson

English Men of Action

MONTROSE

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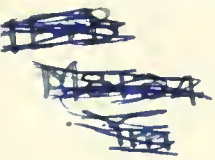
THE MARQUIS OF MONTROSE, K.G.

From a picture by Gerard Honthorst, painted at the Hague in 1649, and presented by Montrose to the Queen of Bohemia; now in the possession of the Earl of Dalhousie.



MONTROSE

BY

MOWBRAY MORRIS

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1892

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CHAPTER I

ANCESTRY AND EARLY YEARS

Tradition still points to a building in the town of Montrose as the birthplace of James Graham, fifth Earl and first Marquis of the line,—a building also fondly cherished by the antiquary as the last to shelter the Old Chevalier on Scottish soil. Both traditions are of course disputed, and both are easy to dispute. The title of Montrose was taken, not from the town of that name but, from the estate of Old Montrose on the opposite side of the bay, which a Graham had acquired from Robert Bruce in exchange for the lands of Cardross in Dumbartonshire. The name is said to be of Gaelic origin, *Alt* or *Ald Moineros*, the Burn of the Mossy Point; but the prefix must have been understood in its Saxon significance at least as early as the twelfth century, for in a charter of that time the place is styled *Vetus Monros*. The old castle has long since disappeared. The Covenanters naturally let slip no chance of despoiling the man they most feared and hated in Scotland; and of the three stately homes owned by the chief of the Grahams at the beginning of the seventeenth century—Kincardine in

Perthshire, Mugdock in Stirlingshire, and Old Montrose in Forfarshire—all went down in the storm of civil war. Montrose's parents seem to have resided at all three impartially, and at the last their son may have been born. If this were so, it is easy to understand how tradition, anxious for some visible memorial of a famous man in the town bearing his name, should have transferred the honour of his birth there across the few miles of water that separated it from the old home of his family. But in fact nothing is certainly known of the place or time of Montrose's birth, except that he was fourteen years old when his father died in 1626, and must consequently have been born some time in the year 1612.

The Grahams had long been conspicuous figures in Scottish history. In 1298 Sir John Graham, the chosen comrade of Wallace, had fallen, more fortunate than his friend, at the battle of Falkirk, in the churchyard of which town his tomb may still be seen. In 1304, at the capitulation which seemed for the moment to have closed the Scots' struggle for independence, Sir David, the first proprietor of Old Montrose, had been specially marked by the English king as a dangerous man. Through the wars of Bruce and his immediate successors the Grahams had stood stoutly by the national cause. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries they had three times intermarried with the royal blood of Scotland. A son of Sir William Graham and the Princess Mary, daughter of Robert the Third, was the first Primate of Scotland; and as a Graham of a later generation had held the see of Dunblane, the indifference expressed for bishops by their illustrious descendant should at least not have been hereditary. One of Sir William's grandsons,

Patrick, was raised to the peerage as Lord Graham in 1451, and in 1505 his grandson William was made Earl of Montrose by James the Fourth, only to fall a few years later by his sovereign's side at Flodden, where he commanded a division of the Scottish van. His grandson fell with equal glory at Pinkie, a field only less disastrous to his country than the field of Flodden. But the most conspicuous of the ancestors of the Great Marquis was his grandfather John, who held in succession the offices of Treasurer, Chancellor, and Viceroy of Scotland. He seems to have possessed his full share of the turbulent spirit which marked the Scottish aristocracy then and for long after an era of milder manners had dawned upon the South. When nearly fifty years old he was engaged in a memorable brawl on the High Street of Edinburgh between a party of his own men and the followers of Sir John Sandilands, by whom one of his clan had been murdered three years previously. In this affair Lord Graham fought by his father's side, and according to one account had been the first to begin the fray. But the general tenor of his life seems to have been unusually peaceful. He bore the part expected of a young Scottish nobleman in the State ceremonies and pageants of the time, and after his succession to the title performed such duties as his position imposed on him with credit if with no particular ability. But his tastes evidently led him rather to the life of a country gentleman than of a man of affairs, and after his wife's death he seems to have devoted himself almost entirely to the care of his children and his estates. His letters show him to have been an affectionate and indulgent father, and the precision of his accounts proves

him an exact but not illiberal manager. His stables were well stocked and well used, and, next to riding, archery and golf were his favourite pastimes. In these his son followed him. His skill at the targets and on the links is one of the few memorials of Montrose's youth that time has spared for us; the grace and dexterity of his horsemanship were famous even in an age and a country where all men and most women rode, and were first learned, as such accomplishments can only be learned, in boyhood, as he cantered on his white pony at his father's side over the fair heritage of his sires. But another of his father's tastes he did not share. The smell of tobacco is said to have been peculiarly disagreeable to him, and sums for tobacco and pipes are frequent in the old Earl's accounts.[1]

[1] Almost all that is known or can be conjectured of Montrose's youth is derived from the accounts of his father's household expenses and of his own at Glasgow and St. Andrews, which were discovered about forty years ago in the charter-chest at Kinnaird Castle. They have been abundantly and cleverly used by Mark Napier in the opening chapters of his *Memoirs of Montrose* (2 vols., Edin., 1856), the last and most complete of the many volumes published by him on his famous kinsman. In respect of the facts of Montrose's life, he may be considered to have exhausted all known sources of information; but outside the facts he must be read with caution. For this purpose there can be no better antidotes than Dr. Burton and Mr. Gardiner have supplied in their grave and judicial histories. The second volume of the latter's *History of the Great Civil War* is invaluable to all who would trace the intricate course of Montrose's Highland campaign. It is unnecessary to enumerate all the original authorities that may be consulted. Students of history are well aware of them, and others may be content to trust Dr. Burton and Mr. Gardiner, who have neglected no means of enabling readers to draw their own conclusions.

Montrose, it may be observed, did not disdain tobacco in all

Montrose was the only son of six children. Their mother was Lady Margaret Ruthven, daughter of the first Earl of Gowrie. It was whispered that, like her brother, she dabbled in magic, and had learned from a witch that her son was destined to be a firebrand to his country. If the report be true—and the Black Art found credence in Scotland long after Lady Margaret's day—she may well have sighed to think that the wild fate which had befallen so many of her family was to be the portion of her son. For the Ruthvens had both done and suffered much evil in their time. Her grandfather, who had died in exile, a fugitive from justice, was that grim lord who had risen from a sick-bed to lead the murderers of Rizzio into their queen's presence. Her father, who had perished on the scaffold, one of the many victims of Arran's intrigues, had been concerned in the violent attempt on the young King's liberty popularly known as the Raid of Ruthven. Her two brothers had perished by the sword before their sovereign's face, a fate which there is too good occasion to believe that they had destined for him. Of her own life nothing more is known than that she bore her husband six children and died in 1618 when the youngest was but three years old. Her two eldest daughters, Lilias and Margaret, were married soon after her death: Lilias to Sir John Colquhoun of Luss, a union destined to an abrupt and shameful end by his flight with her sister Katherine, who had been

its forms, if the testimony of the Stuart Exhibition may be trusted. In that most interesting collection of relics was to be seen the silver snuff-box, shaped like a watch-case, which he is said to have carried in his hand to the foot of the scaffold.

received into the family after her father's death and was then little more than a child; but Margaret, though she did not live long to enjoy it, was more fortunate in her marriage with Archibald, first Lord Napier of Merchiston, a wise and good man who had been particularly recommended by King James to his son as the most judicious and disinterested of all Scottish statesmen. Of the others, Dorothea became the wife of Sir James, afterwards Lord Rollo, and Beatrix, the youngest and apparently her brother's favourite, the wife of the Master of Maderty, one of the first to join Montrose under the standard of their king. Both Margaret and Dorothea died young, the first probably about 1630, the latter in 1638; the deaths of Lilias and Beatrix are unrecorded; of Katherine all traces seem to have been lost after her disappearance from her sister's house in 1631.

In his twelfth year Lord Graham was sent to study at Glasgow under the charge of a tutor, William Forrett. Master Forrett was most scrupulous in keeping account of his pupil's expenses, and to these we owe all our knowledge of this time. It is not much, and, as may be supposed, is rather sumptuary than intellectual. There is mention of certain books bought for the young student, and there is evidence that the tutor borrowed them for his own reading. A Latin version of Xenophon's *Hellenics*, the works of Seneca with Lipsius' commentary, and Fairfax's translation of the *Gerusalemme Liberata* are among them; but the lad's favourite book at this time would seem to have been Raleigh's *History of the World*. Our information as to the domestic establishment is more precise. It was abundant and costly, as was then considered becoming the heir of an

ancient and wealthy house. He had a valet and two pages, plate, furniture, and linen of the best quality, nor was the favourite white pony forgotten. His wardrobe was handsomely stocked with suits of English cloth and embroidered cloaks, and his pages wore scarlet liveries. He was lodged in a large house belonging to Sir George Elphinstone of Blythswood, who had succeeded Napier as Lord Justice-Clerk, and for part of the time little Lady Katherine seems to have lived here with her brother. One pleasant fact at least stands out clear from these dim memories; there was a warm affection and regard between tutor and pupil. Years afterwards, when Montrose had burned his boats by the victory of Tippermuir, one of his first acts was to send for Master Forrett, to resume his part of purse-bearer to his old pupil and to be tutor to his sons.

The sudden death of the father in November, 1626, broke up the establishment at Glasgow, and in the following January Montrose, then only in his fifteenth year, was entered at the University of St. Andrews, as was then the general custom of the young Scottish aristocracy. The funeral ceremonies of the dead Earl give a curious picture of the age. They lasted for one month and nineteen days, during which time all the kinsmen and friends of the family were entertained in the castle of Kincardine. There were Sir William Graham of Braco, the only brother, and the Earl of Wigton, the nephew of the deceased, with the sons-in-law Lord Napier and Sir John Colquhoun. All the branches of the clan were represented; Grahams of Claverhouse and Fintrie, of Inchbrakie, Morphie, Orchill, and Balgowman, with many neighbouring

nobles and lairds, some of them destined in no long time to be the bitter foes of the House they were now assembled to honour. Many of the guests brought with them contributions to the funeral feast as though to a solemn picnic; and other provisions of all kinds were purchased in quantities sufficient to have stocked the Black Douglas's terrible larder many times over, while the wine and ale were reckoned by puncheons and buckets.

Montrose's life at college seems to have been much the same as that of any young man of rank and fortune to-day at Christ Church or Trinity. He mixed freely in all the diversions of the place and time, hunted, hawked, and shot, played golf on the links of St. Andrews and tennis in the court at Leith. At archery he was especially skilful. In the second year of his residence he won the prize annually shot for by the students, a silver arrow with a medal bearing the name of the winner, and this he held against all competitors while he remained at the University. His walls were hung with his bows, just as to-day the successful cricketers and oarsmen of Oxford and Cambridge arrange round their rooms the instruments of their triumphs. Eminent in those accomplishments which always secure the admiration of the young, profuse in hospitality to his friends, liberal to the poor, and especially to those needy professors of the fine arts who were never slow in those days to scent out a generous patron, he evidently began even in these early years to engage the attention of his contemporaries. His own estates and tenants were not neglected; but his vacations were mostly passed in visits to the houses of his brothers-in-law and of the

heads of the various branches of his clan, each of whom, according to the custom of the time, was considered as in some sort the guardian of his young chief, though Lord Napier, Sir William Graham of Claverhouse, and Patrick Graham of Inchbrakie seem to have had the largest share in an office which with a young gentleman of such cheerful tastes and dispositions can have been no sinecure.

This merry life was not, however, without a check. In April, 1628, his sister Dorothea was married from Napier's house in Edinburgh to young James Rollo, and both then and afterwards at Carnock in Fife, where the honeymoon was spent, there had been high festival. The result of all this gaiety, alternated with days of hard exercise in the saddle and on the links, was that the lad fell sick on his return to college. For some days he was seriously ill. Two doctors were called in, and to judge by their fees must have been assiduous in their visits. They ordered their patient's long curls to be ruthlessly shorn, and they ordered also a diet which strikes our modern notions as curiously generous for a young fellow who, to speak plainly, had probably been only over-eating himself. However, nature and the doctors together triumphed—or, it may be, nature in spite of the doctors; and after a few weeks' confinement, cheered by chess and cards and the gift of a valuable hawk from his kinsman of Fintrie, Montrose was once more about at his old occupations—one of the first recorded acts of his convalescence being a breakfast-party given to some of his young friends who had been most attentive to him in his sickness.

Of his studies we know much less than of his amuse-

ments. Sums for the purchase and binding of books appear in his accounts, which were kept as scrupulously by his new tutor, Master John Lambye, as by Master Forrett at Glasgow, and from the same source we learn that he had begun the study of Greek. Plutarch's Lives, Cæsar's Commentaries, Lucan, and Quintus Curtius were now added to his library, though the verses found written in some of them must belong to a later date. Undergraduates, more happy than their descendants, were not in those days pestered with examinations; but that Montrose at least attended lectures after a fashion is clear from an entry in his tutor's accounts of the sum of twenty-nine shillings paid to "a scholar who writes my lord's notes in the school." But we may suppose that his studies were directed more by his own tastes and dispositions than by the curriculum of the place, which, as was the case not so long ago in our English Universities, was not likely to be very sternly enforced on the young aristocrats who then frequented St. Andrews. It is, however, certain that he cannot have passed his time only in play. More fortunate in some respects than another famous member of his House, Montrose has never been called a blockhead because he spelled no better than the rest of his world. Among his contemporaries his reputation stood high. "He was of very good parts," says Clarendon, "which were improved by a good education;" and posterity has accepted the verdict. His intellect was indeed quick and eager rather than solid. His classical knowledge was that rather of a poet than a scholar, and his poetical fame must be content to rest upon a few stanzas which have taken their place among English

lyrics; but it will be seen that he had read and thought much on those problems of government which the inhabitants of this kingdom were then seriously addressing themselves to solve. A book published after his death by Thomas Saintserf (son of the Bishop of Galloway), who had been his secretary during the stormiest years of his life, bears witness, in a dedication to his son, to the polished and scholarly tone of the conversation he loved to encourage among his associates. We are told, and may believe, that the few and enforced pauses in his short tumultuous career were relieved by study; but no man turns to that solace in his hours of disappointment who has not felt at least some touch of its enchantment in his youth. We may therefore conclude that he found some time amid the gaieties of St. Andrews to read the books that had been bought for him.

Among the houses that Montrose visited was Kinnaird Castle, the seat of Lord Carnegie, his nearest neighbour in Forfarshire. The families were already connected by the marriage of Eupheme, Lord Carnegie's youngest sister, to Robert Graham of Morphie. The tie was now to be drawn closer.[1] There were six daughters at Kinnaird Castle, and to the youngest of these, Magdalene, Montrose began to pay his court. The wooing was not long. His

[1] In a later generation it was to be drawn again closer. In 1639 Sir John Carnegie, Lord Carnegie's brother, was created Lord Lour, and in 1647 was promoted to the earldom of Ethie, which was exchanged after the Restoration for that of Northesk. His daughter, also Magdalene, was married to Sir William Graham of Claverhouse, grandson to Montrose's guardian, and their son was the famous Dundee. Lord Carnegie had been created Earl of Southesk at the King's visit to Edinburgh in 1633.

guardians were well pleased to see their young chief in a fair way to carry on the line; and that chief, in youth as in manhood, was not wont to linger over anything he undertook. He was married in the private chapel of the castle on November 10th, 1629. The bride's age is not known, but as the bridegroom can only just have completed his seventeenth year, they may be fairly allowed the conventional title of the young couple. There is a tradition that she had been previously courted by the Master of Ogilvy, which, if true, might suggest that she had some advantage of Montrose in years. But nothing is certainly known of her—of her appearance, tastes, or temper, of the course of her married life or her relations with her husband. She bore him four sons, the second coming into the world just as his father attained his majority, and died in 1645.

According to the terms of the marriage-contract the next three years were passed at Kinnaird Castle, but no record of them exists. All the bridegroom's books, papers, and furniture were removed from St. Andrews to the castle. We catch a glimpse of him very soon after the marriage on the links at Montrose, and we know that he was made a burgess of Aberdeen shortly before the ceremony. We are also told that after the novelty of his new life had worn off, he applied himself so assiduously to his studies as to become, in the pious old chronicler's words, "not merely a great master, but a critic in the Greek and Latin," of which we may believe so much as we choose. But the only visible memorial of this time is his portrait painted by Jameson, who was then practising his art in his native town of Aberdeen. This was Graham of Morphie's marriage-

gift to the bride, and is still to be seen at Kinnaird Castle, where it is said to have remained since it was first hung there more than two centuries and a half ago. Those who have seen it pronounce it to be still in an unusually good state of preservation. Time has dealt tenderly with the long auburn hair, the fresh complexion, and gay clothes of the young bridegroom. The smooth upper lip and arch expression show a mind very different of course from that which had set its seal on the grave and resolute face seen later by Dobson and by Honthorst. But this smiling lad in his slashed doublet, lace collar, and gold chain is clearly father to the stately armoured man who had risked all for his king, and was to lose all.[1]

In the spring of 1633 Montrose left Scotland for the customary period of foreign travel. He was absent three years, but the barest outline of the time alone remains. We know that for some part of it his companion was Basil Fielding, son of the newly-made Earl of Denbigh, that he visited France and Italy, and that in the spring of 1635 he was in Rome with the young

[1] There are four portraits extant of Montrose, all engraved in Napier's book, and very carefully described in the appendix to his first volume. (1) By Jameson, 1629, *ætat.* 17, now at Kinnaird Castle, the seat of the Earl of Southesk. (2) Also by Jameson, 1640, *ætat.* 28, known as the Camstradden portrait, now at Buchanan House, the seat of the Duke of Montrose. (3) By Dobson, *ætat.* 32, probably painted at Oxford in 1644, also at Buchanan House ; this was for a long time attributed to Vandyck, owing to a mistake of the engraver Houbraken. (4) By Gerard Honthorst, *ætat.* 37, painted at the Hague in 1649, and given by Montrose to Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia ; it is now at Brechin Castle, the seat of the Earl of Dalhousie. It is from this last portrait that the frontispiece to this volume has been taken.

Lord Angus and four other Scottish gentlemen. He is said to have continued his studies diligently during this period, and to have particularly affected the society of learned men. "He studied," writes Saintserf, "as much of the mathematics as is required for a soldier; but his great study was to read men and the actions of great men."

Montrose returned to Scotland some time in 1636. He was then in his twenty-fourth year, of the middle height, well and strongly made, of graceful carriage and singularly expert in all bodily exercises, especially in riding. His hair was of the light reddish tinge which darkens with time, and his complexion of that clear fresh colour which is often found with red hair; his nose was aquiline, his eyes gray, bright, and keen. Though not strictly a handsome man, his appearance in later life at least must have been striking, dignified, and noble. Those who knew him only in manhood describe him as being somewhat haughty to strangers, especially if they were his equals or superiors in rank; but to his friends, and always to his inferiors, his manners were singularly courteous and engaging. In his later years of exile he is said to have been somewhat too stately and formal, and inclined, as the saying goes, to take too much upon himself. Burnet, whose friendship for the Hamiltons would not dispose him to think favourably of Montrose—though he does him more justice in the biography of those brothers than in the history of his own time—says contemptuously that he had too much of the hero about him, and that his manner was stately to affectation, insinuating also that his courage was not so certain as his friends pretended. To call Montrose a coward should

be enough to put any witness out of court at once ; but indeed, as Burnet was only seven years old when the man against whom he vented this silly piece of spite died, and as the society he knew best was unlikely to foster any fervent admiration for the great champion of the Throne, his evidence cannot go for much. From the accounts, however, of men better able to judge than the Bishop of Salisbury, it is clear that there was something in Montrose's manner that did not please all tastes, and perhaps seemed fantastic to some. "He was of most resolute and undaunted spirit," writes one of his friends, "which began to appear in him to the wonder and expectation of all men, even in his childhood." And again: "He was exceeding constant and loving to those who did adhere to him, and very affable to such as he knew; though his carriage, which indeed was not ordinary, made him seem proud." These expressions fall in well with Clarendon's famous character of him, and also with the impression made by him on Cardinal De Retz, when they met in Paris in 1647, as the very ideal of one of Plutarch's heroes. These are witnesses of Montrose's prime ; but the carriage that is admitted to be not ordinary in a grown man would probably be still more marked in a young one. The Covenanters, through their great mouthpiece Robert Baillie, declared him to be too proud, headstrong, and wilful for their tastes. Certainly he had little of the tone or temper of the Puritan about him, and of all the young aristocrats who joined them was the least likely to submit himself blindly to their dictation, or become the mere instrument of their factions ; and as he also had evidently a strong partiality for his own opinion, which he was neither slow

to form nor to declare, it is plain that there can never have been much personal sympathy between him and his early associates. We may think of Montrose, then, at this time as a young man full of high resolves and romantic fancies, ardent, aspiring, impulsive, impatient of delay, and always more eager to lead than willing to follow. But his own verses are after all the clearest reflection of his character, and though probably written in the last year of his life, they describe the Covenanter as truly as the Cavalier.

As Alexander I will reign,
  And I will reign alone;
My thoughts did evermore disdain
  A rival on my throne:
He either fears his fate too much,
  Or his deserts are small,
That dares not put it to the touch,
  To gain or lose it all.

CHAPTER II

FOR KING OR COVENANT

MONTROSE had returned to Scotland at a critical time. Eleven years earlier, while he was still reading Seneca with his tutor at Glasgow, the heralds had proclaimed from the city-cross at Edinburgh a royal edict destined to set not Scotland only but the whole kingdom in a blaze. By the Act of Revocation, as it was called, Charles, before he had been a year upon his throne, succeeded in doing what his father through nearly forty years of meddling had been careful to leave undone. The blast of his heralds' trumpets had woke to life again that long feud between the Crown and the aristocracy which had marked the course of Scottish history during the two previous centuries, but which had been gradually declining since Murray scattered his sister's power to the winds at Langside.

It would be hard, at this distance of time and without his excuse, to say in our haste with Knox that there was not one righteous man among the Lords of the Congregation who had assisted him to establish the reformed religion in Scotland; but it is certain that the large majority looked only to the fat revenues of the old Church, and remembered only her

insolence in the day of her power. For a century and a half she had been enriched and strengthened by successive sovereigns as a bulwark against the fiercest and most independent aristocracy in Europe. Under James the Fifth her haughty and dissolute prelates had filled the highest offices of State, while the nobles were despoiled, imprisoned, and banished at their will. The hour of reckoning had now come, and it was to be exacted to the uttermost farthing. But though the reformers were allowed to indulge their pious zeal unchecked in the work of destruction, they were soon made aware that their dangerous allies had no mind to see a new ecclesiastical tyranny set up in the place of the old one. Within less than a year of the establishment of the reformed religion the greater part of the estates of the Catholic Church (estimated at rather more than one-third of the whole wealth of the kingdom) had passed by various and mostly violent ways into the hands of the aristocracy. This was their paramount idea of the Reformation, an idea by which they were determined to stand fast, though all the pulpits in the kingdom should cry shame on them. Murray and Morton, those strong sons of Zeruiah, treated the arguments and the anger of Knox with the same contemptuous indifference, while the astute and mocking Maitland laughed in his face at his scheme of Church government as at "a devout imagination." A miserable pittance doled out of the share of the plunder allotted to the Crown was all that the great Reformer could secure for the maintenance of his new Church. Well might he cry, in the bitterness of his disappointment, "I see two parts freely given to the devil, and the

third must be divided betwixt God and the devil." During Mary's short reign, and under the regents who succeeded her, the wealth and influence of the nobles had risen still higher at the expense of the Crown when not at the expense of the Church. James, on attaining his majority, had indeed done something to better the position of the former, and when more firmly seated on his throne he had done something to better the position of the latter. But, in his own homely phraseology, he knew the stomach of his people too well to put a high hand to these delicate matters. His Act of Annexation only applied to so much of the old Church lands as still remained unalienated, while it practically gave the sanction of Parliament to the titles of those on which the nobles had already laid arbitrary hands. Even of the property then resumed to the Crown he made throughout his reign many and large grants to his favourites. The tithes he did not touch, and it was by the tithes that his son's offence was to come. However much, therefore, he might exasperate the Presbyterian clergy by his Episcopalian proclivities, so long as he left the nobles' property alone he was safe. They had no particular dislike either to the office or style of bishop. With modified powers and under another name bishops had indeed formed a part of Knox's original polity; and so far as they tended to keep the clergy in order and confine them to their proper business, their restoration was not unwelcome to a considerable body outside the Church, and even to some of the less pugnacious spirits within it. All the nobles took thought for was to prevent the creation of a new spiritual aristocracy, that might come in time to be as rich and powerful as the old

Catholic hierarchy they had crushed and despoiled. And of that, so long as they retained the mastery of the funds which alone could make such an aristocracy possible, they had little fear. Probably at no period since the accession of James the First had there been such peace between a Scottish king and his nobles as there was while James the Sixth sat on the English throne.

By the Act of Revocation the scene was changed in a moment. The purpose of the Act was indeed both just and politic. Those writers who will allow no virtue in Charles may claim that his real design was but to increase the revenue and the prerogative of the Crown, and to provide funds for the complete restoration of Episcopacy in Scotland, without any thought for the interests of his oppressed subjects. But his own revenues were not increased; the prerogative of the Crown was strengthened only against an unruly and grasping aristocracy; the oppressed were relieved from a grinding tyranny equal to the worst exercise of the old feudal lordship. The right of tithe, where tithe was levied in kind, gave those who held it absolute power over those who had to pay it. It placed the small landowners and farmers, who were now gradually forming in Scotland a middle class analogous to the English yeomen, at the mercy of men who were, to say the least, not famous for exercising it. The Catholic clergy, it was declared, had been hard masters, but the little fingers of the Protestant nobles were thicker than the loins of the Catholic clergy. The tenant could not gather his harvest until the landlord had taken his tithe; and the landlord took his tithe when it pleased him, regardless of

the interest or convenience of the tenant. It is not to be supposed that all landlords pushed their rights to extremities, but it is certain that there was much harsh dealing and much distress. The bare existence of such rights, moreover, was subversive of the very essence of the Constitution. They gave one class of the community despotic authority over another class, and both Crown and Parliament were as powerless to protect the latter as it was to protect itself. The duties of the sovereign, no less than the liberty of the subject, made a change imperative.

But as usual Charles began unwisely. All Church property held by laymen, in tithe or land, was to be resumed to the Crown on the ground of illegalities in the original concession. The opposition was of course immediate and violent. It was headed by the Chancellor himself, Sir George Hay, afterwards Earl of Kinnoull, an irritable, obstinate old man, and included the greater part of the Privy Council. A deputation was sent to remonstrate with the King; reports were industriously circulated among the people that it was their religion he was really aiming at; his commissioner for carrying out the revocation was threatened with violence. For once Charles was wise with a good grace. The obnoxious Act was withdrawn and a commission known as the Commission of Surrender of Superiorities and Tithes issued in its stead. The terms on which the commissioners were empowered to treat are now unanimously allowed to have been as conciliatory and liberal as was compatible with the redress of a grievance to which sixty years of sufferance had perhaps given some title of respect. Lord Napier was one of the commissioners,

and has recorded his emphatic opinion of the wisdom and justice of the scheme. He has also recorded not less emphatically the factions and dishonest nature of an opposition which was still, though less openly, maintained by the discontented nobles.[1] Simultaneously with this commission a proclamation was issued exempting from their operation all ministers who had been ordained before the Articles of Perth became law, and granting a general amnesty to all who were suffering from opposition to them.

Had Charles been content to stop here, Scotland at least could have had no quarrel with him. Even the nobles, when the first heat of their discontent had cooled, must have recognised that their property, though slightly diminished, was now secured to them by an inalienable title, and would be no longer a source of danger to themselves or to the kingdom. The tithe-payers were freed from an unjust and oppressive burden. The clergy were secured both in the receipt of their income and in what the most tolerant of them at any rate considered the reasonable exercise of their conscience. Could the King go on as he had begun, he was likely to prove the strongest and most popular ruler Scotland had known since his ancestor fell at Flodden. But when any part of the body politic is sick it needs a wise and vigorous physician to keep the infection from spreading. There was a dangerous sickness rife in England, and it was not in the interests of those who had determined on the cure to see it wrought by other means. If one-half of the kingdom were sound, it could be used as an effectual cure for the unsound half. The discontent in Scotland

[1] Napier's *Montrose and the Covenanters*, i. 81-88.

was therefore assiduously fomented from England; and the unfortunate King, neither wise nor vigorous himself, had in Land an adviser whose vigour was rarely on the side of wisdom.

Meanwhile the nobles waited. Though they could harass and delay the Tithes Commission, they were powerless to resist it seriously. The constitution of the Scottish Parliament rendered all opposition to the Crown practically useless unless it was unanimous; and they knew well that the general sympathies of the nation, lay and cleric alike, were in this case on the side of the King. But they knew also that if he made one step more along the dangerous path of religious innovation their time would come. The concession in the matter of the Articles of Perth, and the relief to be obtained from the resettlement of the tithes, had not laid the suspicions of the clergy to sleep. They, too, like the nobles, were waiting, and, unlike the nobles, their religion was more to them than lands, and houses, and goods. The Protestantism of the Presbyterian was sensitive above that of all other Protestants, and there went along with it a deep-rooted national jealousy of English interference. Even those who had no aversion to a moderate form of Episcopacy, and were heartily disgusted with the intolerance and pugnacity of the extreme Presbyterians, thought that it would be best to let well alone, and that any further innovation would be impolitic and dangerous. But all parties had a very shrewd suspicion, which the English malcontents took care to keep alive, that the King would not be content to leave well alone, and that there would soon be further innovations. Then would come the time of the nobles. When dissatisfied men gather to-

gether they do not pause to ask the nature of each other's dissatisfaction. The cave of Adullam was the rallying-ground of every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented.

They had not long to wait. In the summer of 1633 Charles came to Scotland to be crowned, and Laud came with him. He entered Edinburgh on June 15th, and on the 18th the mischief began. The ceremonies of the coronation confirmed the worst suspicions. A table decked in the fashion of an altar was set up in the chapel of Holyrood; behind it was hung a curtain of tapestry enwrought with a crucifix; the bishops engaged in the service wore white rochets and copes embroidered with gold, and each time they passed before the crucifix they bowed their heads. Even the most loyal whispered to each other that it all smelled sadly of Popery. The Tithes Bill was of course passed, but not without an unseemly wrangle between Charles and his Parliament, over which the Scottish law allowed the sovereign to preside in person. Through the year following the King's return to England affairs grew steadily worse. The creation of a see of Edinburgh, the appointment of Archbishop Spottiswoode to the Chancellorship, and of many of his bishops to the Privy Council,—a step odious to all the aristocracy alike, to the tolerant and loyal Napier no less than to the mutinous Loudon,—the Book of Ecclesiastical Canons, the foolish prosecution of Lord Balmerino, all inflamed the rising temper of a nation jealous above all other nations of established customs, and that had ever shown itself quick to dispute the divine right of its kings to do wrong. Last of all,

as a torch to this fatal pyre, came Laud's new prayer-book.

Everything, then, was ready for the explosion when Montrose returned to Scotland in 1636. Which side was a young man of his rank, position, and temper likely to take in the approaching conflict? That question has been variously answered, and is still, if no longer the object of controversy, at least a stumbling-block to many who regard him as the Abdiel of that faithless time. That his character should have in some degree suffered from a contrast which all can discern, and few have been at the pains to examine, was inevitable. Between the champion of the Throne who sealed his loyalty with his life and the leader of men in arms against their sovereign, there must surely be a gulf which no explanation or apology can bridge.

Both in joining and leaving the party of the Covenant Montrose has been represented as influenced solely by wounded vanity. Disappointed by the coldness of his first reception at court, he flung himself into the arms of the Covenanters; disappointed by the ascendency of Argyll in their councils, he flung himself into the arms of the Cavaliers. On the other hand, his action has in both cases been represented as the result of one uniform policy. After long and careful deliberation he formed the conclusion, which was sanctioned if not actually recommended by the most trusted of his friends, the wise and impartial Napier, that the Covenant of 1638 was, in the spirit in which he interpreted it and believed it to have been framed, the one and only plan for redressing the grievances of the Scottish nation without violating the lawful prerogative of the Crown. So

long as he believed this to be the true purpose and scope of the movement, so long did he honestly endeavour to advance it. When he found that other counsels were prevailing, and that the constitutional authority of the Crown was to give place to the self-appointed authority of a handful of its subjects—when he found, in short, that the Covenant of 1638 was ripening into the Solemn League and Covenant of 1643—he at once transferred his allegiance to the King, whose best interests as the appointed and hereditary ruler of his country he had always desired to serve, and had hitherto believed himself to be serving. The truth, as usual, lies somewhere between the two extremes; and this can surely be allowed without casting any stain upon the good faith of Montrose.

Bishop Heylin, the chaplain and biographer of Laud, has told a story which was certainly believed in his time and has been generally accepted down to our own. According to this story, Montrose on his return from his travels had hastened to pay his respects to the King. Charles was never slow to welcome to his court young gentlemen of good position and repute; Montrose especially, the head of one powerful family and allied by marriage with two others on which the royal favour had already been signally bestowed, young, gifted, eager for distinction, was surely justified in anticipating a gracious reception. To his surprise and chagrin the King received him with marked coldness, spoke a few formal words, gave his hand to be kissed, and then turned away to converse with his courtiers.

This rebuff is attributed by Heylin to the intrigues of Hamilton. James, Marquis of Hamilton, was then

some six years older than Montrose. From boyhood he had been about the person of Charles, and was now in his most intimate confidence. Few liked him, and fewer still trusted him; but with the unfortunate King he was all-powerful, especially in matters of Scottish policy, on which at this time he alone was consulted. He had done nothing, that any one could discover, to merit this position. A few years before this date he had led a body of troops to the assistance of Gustavus Adolphus, but had reaped no laurels in that service, though on his return he discoursed so learnedly on the art of war that he persuaded some people to take him for a great soldier, just as by his grave look and reserved manner he persuaded some to take him for a great statesman. He was not without parts and knowledge of affairs, but incurably shifty; and though never convicted of downright treachery, was perhaps only saved from it by his inability to be downright in anything. None of all Charles's evil counsellors, not even the Queen herself, wrought more mischief; and of him, if of any man, it may be said that nothing in his life became him so well as his leaving it.

To this dangerous man Montrose had been advised to pay his court. Hamilton received him with every appearance of cordiality, but had no mind to introduce so likely a rival into his master's good graces. He therefore warned Montrose that the King was at that time much prejudiced against Scotsmen, adding that only his love for his country and his hopes to serve her enabled him to endure the indignities to which he was daily subjected. At the same time he warned the King that Montrose was a dangerous young man, very ambi-

tious, very powerful and popular in Scotland, and not unlikely in the event of any national rising to be set up as king by virtue of an old strain of royal blood in his family. This last insinuation would not fall on deaf ears. Hamilton, indeed, had himself been accused of a similar design, for which his descent from a daughter of James the Second, who had married the first Lord Hamilton, gave at least as much colour as any that Montrose's pedigree could supply; and though Charles had refused to listen to the accusation, and was probably right in refusing, many people still remembered it, and some in Scotland at any rate believed it. Moreover, there was a member of the House of Graham whose claims to the Scottish crown had lately been the subject of much wild talk. This was William Graham, Earl of Airth and Menteith, a man of considerable ability who had filled places of high trust in Scotland, and had been allowed by Charles to resume the older earldom of Stratherne, which had been cancelled two centuries ago in consequence of its inconvenient relations with royalty. It is unnecessary to entangle ourselves in the intricate mazes of Scottish genealogy. It will be enough to say that the question turned on the legitimacy of Robert the Second's children by his first wife, Elizabeth Mure, from whom Charles was descended. Menteith came from the children of the second wife, Euphemia Ross, about whose birth there could be no question. All through the two centuries there had lurked a doubt, sure to be revived whenever the sovereign was in bad favour with his quarrelsome subjects, that the progeny of Euphemia were the genuine Stuarts. Menteith, egged on by some unscrupulous men, of whom in these years there was

never any lack among the Scottish aristocracy, had talked foolishly about his red blood and his "cousin Charles," and cousin Charles had heard of it. His indiscreet kinsman got a sharp lesson to keep that unruly tongue of his quiet. He was stripped not only of all his offices, but of his titles as well; and though he was almost immediately afterwards re-admitted into the peerage as Earl of Airth and Menteith, the dangerous title of Stratherne became a thing of the past for ever, and nothing more was heard of "Elizabeth Mure's bastard." It can easily then be understood how Hamilton's hint would be enough to make Charles look coldly on another of these troublesome Grahams.

This story of Hamilton's mischief has been told twice by Heylin, with the addition that Montrose subsequently alleged it to the King as the cause of his early defection. Heylin was indebted, he says, to Napier for much information on Scottish affairs, and a man who had talked much with Napier was not unlikely to hear something of his well-loved brother-in-law. There is no other authority for supposing that Montrose ever made such a confession. It is not impossible that he may have done so at Oxford when trying to convince the King of Hamilton's treachery. Clarendon makes no mention of it in his account of the charges then brought against the favourite, nor does Burnet, who sets out the charges in full and the answers to them. The latter alludes more than once to the enmity known to exist between the two men, attributing it to Montrose's suspicion that it was Hamilton who had betrayed to the Covenanters his secret correspondence with Charles. But there was common talk of bad blood between them before that date. Montrose

could have had no suspicion at the time of the ill turn Hamilton had played him, or he would certainly have endeavoured to set himself right with his sovereign. From a story told in the appendix to the *Hamilton Papers*, it would appear that he attributed his kinsman of Menteith's disgrace to the favourite's jealousy. It is clear at any rate that they bore no goodwill to each other from the first, as indeed was natural enough, considering the temper of the times and of the two men. Both were young and both ambitious. Hamilton was cold, cunning, and jealous; Montrose was eager and impetuous, and jealous too, though in a more open and generous fashion. When flint and steel come together the sparks are apt to fly.

Those who discredit this story do so on the ground that it discredits Montrose. Had he gone straight from the King into the arms of the malcontents, their argument might be good. But he did not. His interview with Charles took place some time in 1636, and it was not till the end of the following year that he first publicly ranged himself against the Court party. According to Robert Baillie, assuredly no mean authority in these matters, it was the "canniness," or cunning, of Rothes that won Montrose over, though the latter assigned that doubtful honour to Robert Murray, one of the reverend agitators deputed to beat up for recruits to the Covenant in the counties of Perth and Stirling. Rothes, with Loudon and Balmerino, had been in the forefront of the opposition from its beginning; and it is said that Charles had been unwise enough to put a public affront on him in Scotland. He was a clever man, of dissolute life but good

appearance and manners; his religion he could put on and off like his gloves; "no man could appear more conscientiously transported when the part he was to act required it," says Clarendon, who also calls him "the chief architect of the whole machine." The Covenant was not publicly produced for signature till early in 1638; but ever since that memorable Sunday in the summer of the previous year, when the reading of the new prayer-book in St. Giles's Church had been interrupted by an organised tumult of serving-women, various supplications and remonstrances had been forwarded to the King, and various meetings held among the disaffected nobles, clergymen, and others, from which finally sprang the famous Covenant. At one of these meetings, held in November 1637, Montrose made his first public appearance on the side of the malcontents.

It is clear, therefore, that he had ample time for reflection, and that what he did could not at least have been done in the heat of an angry moment. Those who reject the idea that he was seduced against his better judgment by the arguments of Rothes or any other agitator, lay great stress on the probability of his having been guided by the advice of Napier. That he and Napier must have talked much over the evil time they saw coming may be taken for granted. It is certain too that Napier was as honest and loyal as he was sagacious. He was a true King's man, but in the constitutional, not in the absolute sense of the old phrase; an upholder of the monarchy, but of a monarchy ruling according to the established laws of the country. He was of no faction. He sympathised with all that was genuine, and, according to the theories of the Scottish nation, lawful

in the Covenant; but, and it is important to remember this, he would not sign it. The Covenant of 1638 professed to be no more than a renewal of the old Covenant, or King's Confession as it was sometimes called, of 1580-81, which had itself been renewed in 1588, when the fear of the Spaniard was over all the land. But it contained some notable additions. The office of bishops and the promotion of churchmen to civil power were declared to have no scriptural warrant, to be contrary both to the letter and spirit of the original Covenant, which had been subscribed by King James as well as by his subjects, to tend to the re-establishment of Popery, and, in short, to be dangerous to the religion, laws, and liberties of the nation, and no less so to the King's honour. Their loyalty the subscribers to this new bond declared to be unimpeachable, whatever "foul aspersions of rebellion or combination" might be alleged against them by their adversaries. The King's authority was so closely joined with the true worship of God that they must stand or fall together; and as they repudiated all design of doing anything that might turn to the dishonour of God, so did they repudiate all design of doing anything that might turn to the diminution of the King's greatness or authority. "We shall," they swore, "to the uttermost of our power, with our means and lives, stand to the defence of our dread sovereign the King's majesty, his person and authority, in defence and preservation of the foresaid true religion, liberties, and laws of the kingdom; as also to the mutual defence and assistance every one of us of another, in the same cause of maintaining the true religion and his majesty's authority with our best counsel, our bodies, means, and whole power, against all sorts of

persons whatsoever; so that whatsoever shall be done to the least of us for that cause, shall be taken as done to us all in general, and to every one of us in particular." This document was the work of Archibald Johnstone of Warriston, a clever, unscrupulous lawyer, and Alexander Henderson, a Presbyterian minister of more learning and temper than most of his party. It was subsequently revised by Rothes, Balmerino, and Loudon, and so took its place in Scottish history as the Covenant of 1638. In all that related to the appointment of churchmen to civil power Napier must have heartily agreed. He had been bred, as Montrose had been bred, in the reformed religion, and was, as Montrose was, a sincere though not intolerant Presbyterian. To a moderate form of Episcopacy, which should be confined strictly to the economy of the Church, he possibly entertained, as many good Presbyterians from the days of Knox had entertained, no aversion. "Bishops," Montrose declared with almost his last breath, "I care not for them. I never intended to advance their interests." That was probably Napier's attitude to them. It did not seem to him a very terrible thing that one clergyman should have the power of regulating the conduct and prescribing the duties of another, whether he was called Bishop or Moderator. But that a clergyman should be entrusted with civil power he thought dangerous to all parties, to King, Church, and State. There still exists in his handwriting a paper bearing emphatic witness to his sentiments on this head.[1] "That churchmen have competency," it begins, "is agreeable to the law of God and man. But to invest them into great estates and principal offices of

[1] *Montrose and the Covenanters*, i. 67-72.

the State, is neither convenient for the Church, for the King, nor for the State. Not for the Church, for the indiscreet zeal and excessive donations of princes were the first causes of corruption in the Roman Church, the taste whereof did so inflame the avarice and ambition of the successors that they have raised themselves above all secular and sovereign power, and to maintain the same have attended to the world certain devices of their own for matters of faith. Not to Kings nor States, for histories witness what troubles have been raised to Kings, what tragedies among subjects, in all places where churchmen were great. Our reformed Churches, having reduced religion to the ancient primitive truth and simplicity, ought to beware that corruption enter not in their Church at the same gate, which already is open, with store of attendants thereat to welcome it with pomp and ceremony." Nor was he likely to dispute the theory that resistance to innovations dangerous to the peace of the kingdom was compatible with loyalty to the King, and that to preserve the safety of the one was in effect to preserve the authority of the other. "For a King and his people," he wrote, "make up one political body, whereof the King is the head. In a politic as in a natural body what is good or ill for one is so for both, neither can the one subsist without the other, but must go to ruin with the other." Holding these views, and, according to one idea, approving if not actually recommending his brother-in-law's subscription to the Covenant, why, it may be asked, did not Napier himself subscribe it? The answer may perhaps be found in another extract from the same document: "They who are pressed with necessity at home are glad of any occa-

sion or pretext to trouble the public quiet, and to fish in troubled waters to better their fortunes." The snare which lured his young hot-headed relative was spread in vain for the old and cautious Napier. A true Covenanter Montrose called him before the Assembly at Glasgow. He was so; he was too true to the spirit of the real Covenant to be caught by its specious copy; too true a Covenanter to trust himself or his conscience to such keepers as Rothes, Loudon, and Balmerino. A man of his experience in affairs, nor less experienced in the temper of his own countrymen and of the King, cannot but have had a shrewd suspicion whither such a movement under such guides must inevitably tend. It may then be asked why he did not use his influence to dissuade his relative from a partnership he was too prudent himself to join? We do not know that he did not. We know nothing, save that he did not sign the Covenant and that Montrose did. But it is not unreasonable in the circumstances to suppose that his advice may have been given that way, and given in vain. At no time of his life was Montrose easy to persuade against his own feelings. Confident in his own abilities, conscious of his own integrity, why may he not have thought that in him the Covenant would find a leader able to counteract the selfish view of those who were merely troubling the waters to better their own fortune, persuasive enough to guide it into the way it should go, and strong enough to keep it there? And perhaps Napier too believed him to be such a leader.

There remains then only to consider what share, if any, his alleged resentment at the King's behaviour may have had in determining his action. That he joined the

Covenant to revenge himself on the King no one who has studied his character will believe, any more than they will believe that he joined the King to revenge himself on the Covenant. But is there anything unreasonable in believing that his resentment at behaviour of which he was conscious of having given no cause, and so much the reverse of what he had every right and reason to expect, may have rendered an ambitious and impulsive young man more amenable to the plausible arguments and misrepresentations of artful and interested counsellors? If the story of Hamilton's intrigue be true —and it is hard to believe there can have been no truth in it—Montrose had been instructed that the King was ill disposed to Scotland, and the Scots had received what he could not but consider a convincing proof of it. With his own eyes he had seen what the King's disposition was to the religion he had been bred in. Everything that had happened since his return to Scotland had unfortunately tended to confirm the original impression of his own reception and Hamilton's explanation of it. A young man of Montrose's disposition would in such a frame of mind be easy game for such cunning hunters as Rothes and his crew. There was nothing in the letter of the Covenant he signed incompatible with the peculiar nature of Scottish loyalty, which had never been of that patient, unquestioning, one might almost say unreasoning, nature which has sometimes marked the English loyalist. To save the country meant to save the King in spite of himself, in spite of those evil counsellors who stood ever at his ear to poison him against his Scottish subjects. It was an enchanting prospect for an ardent, aspiring young man who had fired his imagination with

the romantic pages of Plutarch. "As Philip's noble son," he had written,

> As Philip's noble son did still disdain
> All but the dear applause of merited fame,
> And nothing harboured in that lofty brain
> But how to conquer an eternal name;
> So great attempts, heroic ventures, shall
> Advance my fortune, or renown my fall.

What greater or more heroic venture could there be than to preserve the religion, laws, and liberties of his country! Hamilton and the unconscious King between them had provided the hour; Rothes found the man.

It is true, therefore, to say that Montrose signed the Covenant deliberately and on reflection, and with the assurance that in so doing he was pledging himself only to a constitutional resistance against an illegal attempt to subvert the religion and liberties of his country, and in nowise combining to undermine and overthrow the lawful authority and prerogative of the Crown. But it is not therefore illogical to believe that various causes conspired to give him that assurance; and that among those causes the jealousy of Hamilton and the cunning of Rothes had their place together with the fanaticism of Laud and the folly of the King.

CHAPTER III

THE COVENANT

YOUNG as Montrose was, discerning eyes had already marked him for one likely to play a conspicuous part on whichever side he might engage. The news that he had joined their enemies filled the Episcopal party in Scotland with consternation. So highly, it is said, did the bishops esteem his talents, that they thought it time to prepare for a storm when he had declared against them. Nor did his allies show themselves less conscious of his worth. They at once appointed him to an important place in their councils. The movement had assumed such proportions that it was found necessary to devise some less unwieldy method of conducting business than a large and tumultuous body of men with no very clear notion of what they wanted or how to secure it. It was above all things necessary for Rothes and his friends to keep the controlling power in their own hands. A committee of sixteen, representing the four Estates of the kingdom, was framed for this purpose. It was known as the Tables, from the rule that all motions were to be formally *tabled*, or recorded, before discussion, and was authorised to act as the responsible agent and mouthpiece of the party. The

four noblemen chosen were Rothes, Loudon, Lindsay of the Byres (one of Montrose's college friends), and Montrose himself. His nephew, by marriage with Napier's daughter, Sir George Stirling of Keir, was one of the four representatives of the lesser barons.

Meanwhile Charles had abated no jot of his arbitrary policy. He had been advised by the Treasurer, Lord Traquair, to withdraw the offending liturgy, and to content himself with enforcing his civil authority. The advice was good, but it may well be doubted whether Baillie was not right in holding that affairs had now gone too far for Charles to follow it. At all events it was not followed. A proclamation was issued announcing the King's entire approval of the new liturgy, his responsibility for it, and his determination to regard all further opposition to it as treasonable. This inflammatory document was read at the city-cross in Edinburgh amid frequent and open expressions of derision. So soon as the heralds had finished, and before, owing to the crowd, they could come down from the platform, a protest prepared for the occasion was read aloud by Warriston from a scaffold raised for that purpose by the side of the old cross. He was supported by a party of sixteen noblemen. Among them was Montrose, who, in the exuberance of his zeal, had mounted on a cask that stood upon the scaffold. Rothes, who was of course present, remarking the young enthusiast's elevated position, and remembering that the place where they were standing was also the place of public execution, said laughingly to him, "James, you will never be at rest till you be lifted up there above the rest in a rope." And this grim jest, its chronicler adds, "was afterwards

accomplished in earnest in that same place; and some even say that the same supporters of the scaffold were made use of at Montrose's execution."

And now the work was done, and Scotland was ripe for the Covenant. Whatever may have been the motives of its originators, there can be no question of the feelings with which the bulk of the people regarded it. Never, even in the heat of the Reformation, had the stern Scottish nature been stirred to such a depth and fervour of passion. Its two strongest feelings had been artfully inflamed, national sentiment and religious enthusiasm. It would be difficult to separate the two, and to apportion to each its share in the general movement. But it is clear that love for the religion they had deliberately chosen and established with tears and blood was at this time strongly deepened by the thought that it was menaced by a king of the hated English.

The place and time for the great ceremony were chosen. The time was the last day of February, 1638. The place was the church but lately raised beneath the shadow of the great castle whence had issued but a few short years previously, with all the pomp of a monarch moving amid a rejoicing people to assume the crown of his fathers, the King whose authority they were now met to renounce. Of all the historical spots in that beautiful city there is none that an Englishman surveys with more mingled feelings than the churchyard of the Greyfriars. There at the appointed hour came the leading members of the Tables, with Warriston to read the sacred document and Henderson to explain it for any who still wavered. Loudon and Rothes spoke with all their

artful eloquence, reiterating their professions of love for their religion and loyalty to their King. Then Warriston read aloud the Covenant from a parchment of an ell square. There were few doubters, and they were soon and easily satisfied. The Earl of Sutherland, the highest nobleman present, was the first to sign his name. One after another, all within the church followed him. Then, as the shadows of the winter evening deepened over the solemn scene, the parchment was carried outside and read once more to the eager crowd which thronged every corner of the churchyard. As the last words were spoken—"that religion and righteousness may flourish in the land, to the glory of God, the honour of our King, and peace and comfort of us all"—all hands were raised to heaven in token of assent, while old men, in whose ears the fiery tones of Knox might have rung, wept tears of joy to see that the spirit of the great Reformer still lived among his countrymen. The parchment was then spread upon a tombstone, and all who could get near pressed forward in turn to sign it. During the next two days it was carried round the city, accompanied by a sobbing, praying multitude. Signatures came in apace from citizens of all classes and every age. Even serving-women and little children, who could neither write nor read, pledged themselves to the good cause with the assistance of a notary. It is said that many in the ecstasy of the moment wrote their names in blood drawn from their own veins. Copies were made of it, bearing the names of the chief subscribers, and entrusted to all who would undertake the office of recruiting for this holy war. Nobles and gentlemen galloped about the country with these copies in their

pockets. Agents were sent round to all the principal towns and to the Universities. Ministers read aloud the call to arms from their pulpits, and exhorted their congregations to sign. Those who refused were threatened, and even violence was sometimes employed. Names are of course easily collected, if only trouble enough be taken to collect them. Many signed the Covenant, as many have always signed and will always sign whatever is laid before them, without any clear understanding to what they were pledging themselves, simply because others had done so. Many signed through fear of the consequences of a refusal. But when allowance has been made for all the arts commonly employed to foment a popular disturbance, and for all the motives which have power to influence the popular mind at such times, it is impossible to doubt that, so far as the Covenant was understood to be taken in defence of the national religion, it reflected the current of the national thought.

Scotland was now practically in a state of rebellion, and the Tables began to assume the airs of a sovereign. Munitions of war were collected and moneys levied. Several of the leaders had already come forward with voluntary subscriptions, Montrose heading the list with a contribution of twenty-five dollars. It was determined to supplement this with a more certain source of supply. A general tax was levied of a dollar on every thousand marks of rent. Though delicately called a contribution, it was in effect a tax, and a tax, moreover, levied with a strictness to which Scotsmen had hitherto been strangers. A committee was appointed for the purpose, soon to be known by the appropriate title of the War Committee. It was clear that some more serious effort must be made

to maintain the royal authority than the issue of proclamations that were only laughed at. Hamilton was accordingly commissioned to treat with the Covenanters. He was empowered to make certain concessions, such as the King fondly conceived, or pretended to conceive, should be sufficient to assure all loyal Scotsmen that he had no design on either their religion or their laws. He might promise, for example, that the new Canons and the new Liturgy should not be pressed except in what Charles was pleased to call a fair and legal way. Some modifications also might be made in the Court of High Commission, a harmless invention of the previous reign with nothing but the name in common with that tribunal so odious to Englishmen, but which nevertheless was equally odious to Scotsmen, as relegating to bishops that moral supervision of the Church previously vested in the Presbyteries. But on one point the King was firm. No concession was to be made, nothing was to be promised, until the Covenant had been rescinded. In vain did all his advisers, Scots and English, clerics and laymen, assure him that negotiation on these terms was hopeless. It mattered not. The Covenant, he answered, was a standard of rebellion, and until it was taken down he had no more power in Scotland than a Doge of Venice.

On this bootless errand Hamilton arrived in Edinburgh early in June, and took up his quarters in Holyrood. An immense concourse assembled to see him enter the city. The road between Leith and Musselburgh was lined with nearly sixty thousand people. At the most conspicuous spot five hundred ministers were congregated in their black gowns. The Commissioner, according to Baillie, was moved to tears at such a sign of the national

feeling. Hamilton's powers of dissimulation were indeed remarkable; but it may be doubted whether on this occasion the good Covenanter's emotion, and the pride he felt at the noble display made by his own cloth, did not a little overcome his usual acuteness. It is certain, however, that the Commissioner was extremely gracious, bowing and smiling on every side, though he skilfully managed to evade a speech which had been prepared in welcome by Mr. William Livingstone, "the strongest in voice," as Baillie naïvely remarks, "and austerest in countenance of us all." This, Hamilton suggested, might be more properly appreciated at a private audience.

The Tables had selected six of their number as commissioners on their part, three noblemen and three ministers. Among the former were that inseparable pair Rothes and Loudon; the third was Montrose. To Henderson and Dickson was added a colleague rejoicing in the ominous name of Cant. They presented their demands: the withdrawal of the new Liturgy, the Book of Canons, and the Court of High Commission, and the summons first of a free General Assembly, instead of a packed body of subservient courtiers such as had restored Episcopacy at the will of the late King, and then of a Parliament to finally settle all matters concerning religion. Hamilton demanded as an inevitable preliminary to all concessions the renunciation of the Covenant and their return to their lawful allegiance. They professed themselves to be still as always loyal subjects, and declared that they would as soon renounce their baptism as the Covenant. All through June the controversy dragged its fruitless length along. Hamilton by turns

argued, pleaded, warned, and threatened. The King, he said, was ready to grant all that honour would permit him, and all that was necessary to establish their religion and liberties; beyond that they should not press him. By so doing they would forfeit the sympathies of those in England who wished well to sufferers, but would never wish well to rebels. If they still persisted in their unreasonable and seditious course, the King would come in person to settle the matter with forty thousand men at his back. Unfortunately for Hamilton's argument, Rothes and Loudon were as well informed on the state of affairs in England as himself. They had sharp spies at Court, even in the King's own household. They knew exactly what were the Commissioner's instructions, and had no fear of forfeiting the sympathy of their English partisans by persisting in their demands. There is no doubt that the firm front of the Covenanters was now greatly strengthened by assurances from the English Opposition. As usual, too, Hamilton played a double part. For this indeed he had some excuse. He had received permission from Charles to employ all means to gain time, short of giving any promise that would have afterwards to be revoked or of recognising the lawfulness of the Covenant. Time was of the utmost importance now, for it soon became clear to Hamilton, and he made it clear to the King, that an appeal to force was the inevitable end of the negotiations, and that all that remained for him to do was to prolong the time till force was ready. But it is doubtful whether Charles would have understood this permission to include an assurance to his rebellious subjects that to stand firm was the only and the certain

way of gaining their ends. Yet a very circumstantial story seems to fix this treachery on the King's Commissioner. He had brought with him to Scotland two forms of the royal declaration against the Covenant; in the first it was plainly denounced as an act of rebellion and its immediate surrender demanded; in the second somewhat more general and conciliatory language was employed. In one of his earliest letters Hamilton had assured the King that it would be impossible to publish the more outspoken document; he now wished to leave even the gentler one unread. But on that point Charles was firm. Hamilton might return to England for further counsel and instruction, but the declaration in its milder form must be published. The Commissioner had recourse to one of those ignoble artifices which were his idea of diplomacy. Pretending that he had resolved not to publish either declaration (of whose existence the Covenanters were very well aware) he left Edinburgh, but returning suddenly at noon of the next day the second and milder declaration was read at the cross. But he had to do with men as cunning as himself. A few had been deceived by his pretended departure, but only a few. Before the herald had finished a crowd had assembled, and among them was the inevitable Warriston with his protest and a trusty band of supporters. The document was longer, less respectful, and more explicit than the one hitherto used, leaving indeed no further doubt, had any previously existed, of the nature and extent of the Covenanters' demands, and of their resolution to be satisfied with no compromise. The Liturgy, the Book of Canons, the Court of High Commission must go; a free General Assembly and a

free Parliament must be summoned; the Covenant must be maintained. The applauding crowd, excited by Hamilton's foolish attempt to overreach them, were with difficulty restrained from putting to the sword the few who had the courage to raise their voices for the King. So strong was the popular feeling against the declaration that those members of the Council who had given a grudging assent to it now wished to retract, and threatened that, if not allowed to do so, they would themselves take the Covenant. While Hamilton was arguing with them a deputation from the Covenanters was announced. They came to protest against the declaration. When they had been heard, Hamilton, excusing himself to his colleagues, withdrew with them into another room where he addressed them in these remarkable words: "My Lords and Gentlemen, I spoke to you before those Lords of the Council as the King's Commissioner; now there being none present but yourselves, I speak to you as a kindly Scotsman. If you go on with courage and resolution you will carry what you please, but if you faint and give ground in the least you are undone—a word is enough to wise men." The authority for this monstrous speech rests on two of the deputation, who heard it and repeated it in identical terms within four-and-twenty hours of its being spoken. One of these was Montrose himself, the other was his colleague, the minister Cant. They told it separately to Bishop Guthrie, then a minister at Stirling, in whose Memoirs it may be read. The Bishop adds that the incident created an uneasy feeling in Montrose's mind that Hamilton was playing both sides false in order to advance those designs on the crown of Scotland of

which he had been, it will be remembered, already accused, and which many at least of his own countrymen still believed him to entertain. He told Guthrie that he should form no rash conclusions, but that meantime he should keep his eyes open and look carefully to his own steps.

It will but anticipate the course of events by a few months to wind up at once the tangled skein of these negotiations. Twice again in 1638 did Hamilton visit Scotland. Each time he came with fresh concessions, too late to be of any real service, yet enough to convince the Covenanters of the truth of the Commissioner's ill-omened words that everything would be gained by standing firm. Once again a royal proclamation was heard from the city-cross; once again it was followed by a protest, more defiant than any of its predecessors. The King had proposed a Covenant on his own account, made up of those of 1580 and 1590, the latter binding all who signed it to stand by the King in "suppressing of the Papists, promotion of true religion, and settling of his Highness's estate, and obedience in all the countries and corners of the realm." To sign this, said the indignant protesters, would be to make themselves guilty of mocking God, inasmuch as they of all men needed no adjuration to suppress Popery. On another point their language was still more emphatic. Charles had granted the demand for a General Assembly, and had promised that the obnoxious Liturgy should be absolutely revoked, together with the Book of Canons and the Court of High Commission, that the practice of the Articles of Perth should be for the present suspended till Parliament should pronounce its final decision on

them, and that the authority of the bishops should be made subject to the authority of the Assembly. In a word, all that they asked was conceded; but the hour for concessions had passed. Episcopacy must go root and branch. All that the King made by his submission was to hear that he had no power to make or withhold it. Matters of religion were not in his hands, but in the divinely appointed hands of the Assembly, and in theirs only. Thus the Covenanters cast to the winds the last shred of their professed loyalty, and practically declared war against the King's authority.

These things were done at the end of September. On November 21st the General Assembly was to meet at Glasgow. The intervening time was spent by Hamilton in vain attempts to influence the elections and to procure signatures for the new or King's Covenant, as it was called. In both he was equally unsuccessful. The Assembly was constituted after a fashion which left no doubt what its temper was likely to be. Going back to an Act of 1587, it was resolved to elect lay as well as ecclesiastical members. This was what Hamilton wished to prevent. The ministers alone he thought he might still be able to persuade to show some respect for the prerogative of a King who was ready to grant so much, and who had already shown himself both willing and able to make their position easier and more secure. Nor were the ministers themselves well pleased to see the office that was rightly theirs shared among men who, as they knew well, were for the most part influenced by no real love for religion, and whose lives were in too many instances at direct variance with its teaching.

But the nobles, in Baillie's expressive phrase, had now got their feet in the stirrup, and were not to be stopped from the game they had started. Moreover, it was in them that the real strength of the Covenant as a national movement against an arbitrary king still lay. The people knew this, and the ministers were not strong enough to dictate to the people. The Tables were the controlling power of the elections, and of that body no member was now busier or more resolute than Montrose. The King's Covenant proved a lamentable failure. Few could be found to sign it compared with the crowds that still thronged daily to subscribe its rival, and of these nearly one-half came from Aberdeen and the neighbourhood, which through all the trouble had stood stoutly by the Throne; while a mad woman named Margaret Nicholson, who went about the country proclaiming herself empowered to declare the National Covenant a direct gift from heaven, and the King's from another place, was generally accepted as an inspired prophetess.

On the appointed day the Assembly met, a day not less momentous in the history of Scotland than that on which two years later the Long Parliament met in the old chapel of St. Stephen was destined to prove in the history of England. The place appointed was the venerable cathedral, one of the few triumphs of Gothic art which had been preserved by the affectionate pride of the citizens from the furious zeal of Knox's Vandals. On a high chair of state sat Hamilton in all the pomp, the barren pomp as he was now conscious, of the representative of the Crown. The Privy Council were ranged below him. Directly opposite were placed

seats for the Moderator and his clerk. At a long table in the body of the church sat the Lords of the Covenant, while the representatives of the Presbyteries had to be content with humbler places on either side behind them. Beyond these again was a stage for the accommodation of the sons of the Covenanting nobility and other distinguished spectators, while every unoccupied part of the building was thronged with a vast and miscellaneous crowd, including many gentlewomen. Not a single bishop was present. Only two indeed, the Bishops of Ross and Argyll, had ventured to enter the city; they had come under the protection of Hamilton and his friends, and were now lodged safely in the castle. Swords and daggers were to be seen on all sides. The regularly elected members numbered two hundred and forty in all, of whom one hundred were laymen. But besides these there were almost as many again who had no vote nor lawful place in the Assembly and professed to be there only in the capacity of friends, *amici curiæ* as it were, to impart confidence by their presence, and perhaps aid by their counsels. Many of them could neither read nor write, but they were strong in numbers and loud of voice. Great care had been taken to exclude all who had not subscribed the Covenant. The provost had issued a number of leaden tickets stamped with his arms, without which no spectator was admitted into the building, and the distribution of these was solely in the hands of the Covenanters. To add to Hamilton's discomfiture, he was aware that he could no longer trust even the members of his own council so far as any vote on Episcopacy was concerned.

"What then," he wrote to the King on the day after this Assembly had met, "what then can be expected but a total disobedience to authority, if not a present rebellion?"

It was soon made clear that nothing else was to be expected, for that nothing else was intended. After Hamilton had read his commission, and a protestation on behalf of the bishops had been refused a hearing, Henderson was chosen for Moderator and Warriston for his clerk. Then began a dreary week of disputing and protesting on all sides on every conceivable subject, to the utter weariness of everybody but the clerk, who received a piece of gold with each fresh protest. Few appear to have contributed more to this waste of time than Montrose himself, who was, moreover, responsible for a general wrangle in which the Moderator did not display the quality to be expected from his title, and which the Commissioner found some difficulty in quelling. It arose on a disputed election in which the Tables had overridden the authority of the Presbyteries. Montrose was of course on the side of the former, the dispute having indeed arisen on a rather high-handed exercise of his power as a member of the Tables, which the more wary of the party were desirous of concealing, and Montrose of course, through all his life the sworn foe of all compromise, insisted on justifying. It was doubly unfortunate for him that the candidate he opposed should have been his brother-in-law young Carnegie, and that his opposition should have led to an unseemly display of temper between him and his father-in-law Southesk. The dispute did Montrose no good with either party. The Covenanters were annoyed to find

so young a man disposed to take too much upon himself against the wiser counsels of his elders; and Hamilton was, as will be seen, enabled to speak another bad word for him in the King's ear.

It was not till the 28th that the real business began. The unfortunate bishops were as usual the cause of war. They had declined to accept the jurisdiction of the Assembly as at present constituted, and the Moderator now put the question to the vote. Hamilton then rose. He read again the King's offer to abolish all grievances, and to make bishops for the future subject to the authority of the Assemblies; but he refused to acknowledge the authority of an Assembly in which laymen were allowed to speak and vote. A warm debate ensued. The Moderator declined to reopen a question which the Assembly had already decided in its own favour. "If the bishops," said Loudon, "decline the judgment of a National Assembly, I know not a competent judgment-seat for them but the King of Heaven." "I stand to the King's prerogative," replied Hamilton, "as supreme judge over all causes, civil and ecclesiastical, to whom I think they may appeal, and not let the causes be reasoned here." It was all in vain. The Assembly were determined to have no bishops on any terms, and no king save on their own terms. Nothing remained for Hamilton, as representing the Crown, but to declare the Assembly an illegal body and to dissolve it. This he accordingly did, with tears in his eyes as some said, and left the cathedral while the inevitable protest against his action was being read. Returning to Edinburgh he made such preparations as time and means allowed for garrisoning the castle, and then left the

country, not to return to it again but as leader of the King's forces against rebels in arms.

The Assembly, thus freed from all control, made short work of the bishops. Six out of the fourteen were simply deposed; the rest were deposed and excommunicated on charges sometimes of the most heinous nature, which the most trivial evidence, when any was offered at all, was considered amply sufficient to establish. Baillie owns, for instance, that certain acts of gross immorality brought against the Bishop of Galloway were not in his opinion conclusively proved; but he adds, as though to make up for this injustice, that the unfortunate prelate had at least "all the ordinary faults of a bishop," besides the capital one of being the first who had dared to flaunt the robes of his office in Edinburgh. The new Liturgy, the Book of Canons, the Court of High Commission, and the Articles of Perth all followed the bishops one after another into the limbo of unholy things. Sentence of excommunication was also pronounced against many clergymen who had shown, or were suspected of, a leaning to Episcopacy: the six General Assemblies which had sat under Episcopal government were declared to have been illegal; and the Scottish Church was thus restored to the pure Presbyterianism established by the Act of 1592. Thus, when on December 20th this memorable body dissolved itself, it had accomplished in longer time, but with equal thoroughness, a revolution not less momentous than that which seventy-eight years earlier had in a single day transferred the national faith from Rome to Geneva.

Nor was this the Covenanters' only triumph. The departure of Hamilton was the signal for the appearance

of an invaluable convert. Archibald, Earl of Argyll, then in his fortieth year, and but lately succeeded to the title and vast estates of his father, was reckoned the most powerful subject in the kingdom. His only rival in the Highlands was Huntly, and his revenues were larger and he could bring a larger following into the field than the chief of the Gordons. In intellect there was no comparison between them. Argyll, according to Clarendon, wanted nothing but courage and honesty to make him a very great man. The want of honesty was too common a want in the politicians of those days to mark a man among his peers, but cowardice was indeed rare among all classes; and though he was destined to show that, like so many men whose nerves are uncertain, he could face inevitable death with calmness and dignity, in the presence of danger it is indisputable that Argyll's physical courage was, to say the least, not conspicuous. Cool, cunning, and sagacious, he had, though at once a Privy Councillor and a rigid Presbyterian, been hitherto careful to identify himself prominently with neither party. But Hamilton had gauged him truly when he warned Charles to beware of him as the most dangerous man in the State. The same warning had indeed been previously conveyed to the infatuate King by one who had still better cause to know the truth than Hamilton. There had been trouble between father and son, and Charles, with whom the latter had been always a favourite, had ordered the Earl, who had turned Catholic in his old age at the bidding of a young wife, to leave the kingdom. The father obeyed without remonstrance, but before he went he warned the King to beware of his son. "Sir," he said, "I must

know this young man better than you can do. You may raise him, which I doubt you will live to repent, for he is a man of craft, subtlety, and falsehood, and can love no man, and if ever he finds it in his power to do you a mischief, he will be sure to do it." So powerful an ally was received of course with open arms by the Covenanters. Hitherto they had been doubtful whether they should regard him as friend or foe. His conduct, said Baillie, had been ambiguous. This was now explained by Argyll's assurance that he had always secretly been on their side and had only delayed declaring himself for them while he conceived that this ambiguity might best serve their interests; matters had now come, he said, to such a height that no honest man could hold back. His speech was long, pious, and profuse in good advice. The Moderator and the rest of the ministers professed themselves enraptured, and all parted on the best terms with each other.

Two days before Hamilton dissolved the Assembly, but when it had already clearly shown him what he was to expect from it, he despatched a long letter to the King, warning him what the issue was almost certain to be, pointing out the precautions to be taken, and taken at once if his warnings were proved true, and commenting on the character of the movement and of its leaders with a frankness unusual in him. In this letter Montrose is mentioned in a way which tends still further to confirm the truth of Heylin's story. "Now for the Covenanters," the passage runs, "I shall only say this, in general they may all be placed in one roll, as they now stand. But certainly, sir, those that have both broached the business, and still hold it aloft, are

Rothes, Balmerino, Lindsay, Lothian, Loudon, Yester, Cranston. There are many others as forward in show, amongst whom none more vainly foolish than Montrose." This is precisely the language of a man anxious to remind his correspondent what he had predicted of a third party, and to point out how exactly his prediction had been proved true.

CHAPTER IV

THE FIRST BISHOPS' WAR

Only one town of importance now refused to acknowledge the new power. Aberdeen, then the second city in Scotland, rich, populous, learned, and loyal from the first, still turned a deaf ear alike to the promises and the threats of the Covenant. The citizens of Aberdeen were no bigoted followers of Laud. They held rather of the school of their late bishop, the wise and benevolent Forbes, content with things as they were, and suspicious of any change which threatened to interfere with their comfortable and studious independence. They desired, indeed, chiefly to be let alone; but not to be for the Covenant was to be against it, and there was, moreover, a particular reason why Aberdeen could not be suffered to remain neutral. It was the capital of that large district wherein the House of Gordon reigned supreme, as the House of Campbell was supreme in the West; and the Aberdeen burghers, whatever their religious opinions might be, could not but be the political allies of the House of Gordon. The old Marquis of Huntly had been always a favourite with James, who knew that the fiery old Papist if one of the most turbulent was also one of the most loyal of his subjects.

His son George, who had lately succeeded him, had been brought up at Court with the young princes in the faith of the English Church, and had married a sister of Argyll. He had for some time commanded the Scottish Guard in France, and had served with distinction in the campaign against Austria; but the lavish state he had maintained as captain of that famous corps had plunged him deep into debt, and it was believed that he would listen to any proposal likely to relieve his desperate fortunes. Overtures had already been made to him from the Covenant on these conditions, and had been rejected. "My house," he said, "has risen by the Kings of Scotland, has ever stood for them, and with them shall fall, nor will I quit the path of my predecessors; and if the event be the ruin of my sovereign, then shall the rubbish that belongs to it bury beneath it all that belongs to mine." The spirit which prompted this gallant answer was sincere, but, as Charles and Montrose were both to find to their cost, it could not always rise superior to more selfish feelings. For the present he had been appointed Lieutenant for the King in the North, instructed to arm his men, and promised succours from England. But he had also been instructed to take his orders from Hamilton, and not to act without them; for the present he had merely to get ready, to stand on the defensive, and above all things to avoid any open act of hostility. Huntly knew well enough the futility of such orders. Not to move without Hamilton was to stay where he was till he was turned out by the Covenanters. Still there was nothing for him but to obey, and hold himself in readiness to join hands with the unwelcome ally who had been thrust upon him.

There was no time to be lost. The King was slowly assembling an army for the Borders, and the Covenanters could not march south with such an enemy in their rear. If Hamilton could effect a juncture with Huntly on the east coast, at the same time as the Irishry under Antrim and Strafford were landed on the west, it would go ill with the Covenanters. They had not been idle. The castles of Edinburgh, Dumbarton, and Dalkeith had been carried by surprise within a few hours of each other, and Mar could be trusted to hold Stirling safe. In the West the power of Hamilton and Douglas had been dealt a serious blow by the seizure of their strongholds in Arran and Clydesdale. Of all the fortresses in Scotland, Lord Nithsdale's Castle of Caerlaverock in Dumfriesshire was alone held for the King. From the Border to the North Sea the Covenant was supreme, save only in that dangerous district which called Huntly lord, and against the power of Huntly the arms of the Covenant were now turned.

The command was given to Montrose. His restless and enterprising spirit marked him for the work among men whose talents appeared to lie rather in debate than in the field. His own estates, moreover, lay near, and though his following was but a handful compared with Huntly's power, he would be more likely to gain recruits than an unknown leader. But Montrose was young, hot-headed, too fond, it was feared, of his own way, possibly also too punctilious. Some older man must go with him, more experienced in war and more accustomed also to obey, who, while nominally Montrose's lieutenant, might keep a watchful eye over him. The man for this purpose was found in Alexander

Leslie, a cadet, though an illegitimate one, of the House of Rothes. Though a little man and deformed, Leslie had won fame and rank in the Thirty Years' War, where so many of his countrymen had been fighting for the Protestant cause under the great Gustavus. During a short visit to Scotland in the spring of 1638 Leslie had seen how the land lay. He had returned to Germany, but not for long. By the end of the year he was back again, with good news and better than news for the Covenanters. During his absence he had been recruiting for them among their countrymen who, like himself, had taken service under the Lion of the North, and collecting stores of military supplies. Some of these were intercepted by the English cruisers, but the most part found their way into Scotland, where Leslie was welcomed with open arms. He was soon appointed general of the Covenanting forces, and they could not have found a better man. Though without the military genius of his nephew David, he was as accomplished in all the mechanism of war as any man of his time, cool, sagacious, and certain never to be hurried into mischief by a misguided enthusiasm for any cause. King and Covenant were much the same to him; but fighting was his trade; the death of Gustavus had set him free to serve another flag; he was a Scotsman and a Protestant, above all a kinsman of Rothes, whose "canniness" was not likely to let so useful an ally go. Leslie was, in short, a favourable specimen of that class of soldier of fortune which the incomparable genius of Walter Scott has fixed for ever in the character of Dugald Dalgetty.

This was not Montrose's first visit to Aberdeen as an agent for the Covenant. He had been there in the pre-

vious summer, but in more peaceful guise. Instead of Leslie and a following of armed soldiers, he had been accompanied only by a few laymen of no particular importance, and the three apostles of the Covenant, Henderson, Dickson, and Cant. It was not a very fruitful visit. The ministers of Aberdeen would not give up their pulpits to the strangers, and the apostles had to deliver their doctrine from a gallery of the Earl Marischal's house, then occupied by his sister Lady Pitsligo, a staunch Puritan after the fashion of Hamilton's mother and of Montrose's own aunt Lady Wigton. Montrose was of course present, sitting at her ladyship's side, to the regret, doubtless, of many who recalled the different circumstances in which they had last seen him, when the bells rang in honour of the gallant young bridegroom who had just been elected a burgess of their loyal town. The apostles wisely chose the hours between the church services so as to make sure of an audience; and an audience they secured, but one not entirely to their taste. The respectful part listened with more curiosity than conviction, and not all were respectful. A few insignificant proselytes were gained, and a grievous insult was cast upon the good city. Aberdeen prided itself upon its hospitality, and when the provost and bailies heard that their young townsman was on the road to visit them, they prepared a collation in his honour and came to welcome him at his lodging. But Montrose treated them with scant ceremony, and refused to receive anything at their hands till they had subscribed the Covenant, an affront which had never before, they vowed, been put upon Aberdeen within the memory of man!

They prepared a different welcome now for the young Earl. The citizens were armed and drilled, guns mounted, trenches dug, and the town generally put into such a state of defence as was possible. Meanwhile Montrose was at his own place in Forfarshire, beating up for recruits. While there he heard that the few allies the Covenant could boast in that quarter were to meet at Turriff, a market-town on the borders of Banffshire, mostly gentry of the district, Frasers and Forbeses, who were jealous of the Gordons and ready to join any party against them. Huntly heard also of the meeting and resolved to disperse it. But Montrose was too quick for him. With one of those lightning dashes which were to be the secret of his successes against the Covenant, he now won the first point in the game for it. Taking with him barely two hundred of his own men, he hurried across the Grampians by the most unfrequented routes, and when Huntly at the head of two thousand men marched into Turriff he was greeted with a compact array of musket-barrels levelled at him across the wall of the little churchyard. His orders were explicit. He was not to proclaim his commission till the time came, and that mysterious moment was to be decided not by him but by Hamilton. Moreover he was to avoid all risk of bloodshed for the present. He knew Montrose would fight, and, though he was perhaps the better man for the moment, he knew also that Leslie was at hand with a force more than double his own. Had the positions of the two leaders been reversed there can be no doubt what Montrose would have done. But Huntly was not Montrose. He withdrew to Inverury, and

disbanding the most part of his men left Aberdeen to its fate.

This was not so severe as probably the citizens had expected, and as certainly some of the Covenanters wished. A few days after the affair at Turriff, Montrose joined hands with Leslie and entered Aberdeen in triumph at the head of six thousand men, each of whom wore a blue scarf, or carried a knot of blue ribbons in his cap, in opposition to the royal scarlet which Huntly had taken for his colours. To condescend to the devices of these godless cavaliers shocked some of Montrose's solemn captains, but the young general was right. He knew the value of a distinctive symbol to warm men's hearts, especially the hearts of soldiers, and that it was none the worse for pleasing their eyes as well. The blue ribbons were at once popular, and Montrose's *whimsies*, as they were at first contemptuously called, soon became the recognised badge of the Covenanters.

There was no attempt at opposition. Disgusted at Huntly's defection, the most resolute spirits had left the city and sailed south to join the King. The rest could do nothing but accept the Covenant and trust to Montrose's mercy. He was not hard upon them. Having marched his men through the town he quartered them on the links outside, with strict injunctions to keep good order and to pay for all they consumed. The citizens were set to work at filling up the trenches they had dug and removing all traces of their improvised fortifications, and a fine of ten thousand marks was imposed on the town. Then, leaving behind him a garrison under the command of his college friend Lord Kinghorn, whom he named governor of the town, Mon-

trose marched north after Huntly, who had retreated from Inverury to Gordon Castle in the Bog of Gicht.

Huntly was anxious to come to terms, and Montrose when left to himself had no wish to make them hard. The two men accordingly met by appointment near Inverury, each attended by eleven friends armed only with walking-swords. The two chiefs stepped aside to talk. What passed between them can only be conjectured, but after a long conference Huntly and his companions returned with Montrose to his camp at Inverury, where they were courteously received. Here Huntly signed a paper, known in the language of the time as a bond of maintenance, probably containing (for its exact terms were never made clear) those clauses of the Covenant which professed respect to the King's authority and a love for the national religion and liberties, pledging himself also not to interfere with any of his vassals who had a mind to mount the blue ribbon. Such of them as were Papists Montrose, on his part, promised to protect so long as they were willing to assist in maintaining the laws and liberties of their common fatherland. Huntly, however, who saw many of his personal enemies in the camp, Crichton of Frendraught in particular, the sworn foe of his House,[1] was doubtful how far this arrangement would be allowed to hold good. He employed one of his followers, therefore, to warn Montrose against evil counsellors who, he said, would be certain to work him

[1] The ghastly tragedy known as the Burning of Frendraught, in which young Aboyne, Huntly's brother, with some other Gordons, were treacherously murdered while guests under Crichton's roof, had happened only nine years earlier, in 1630.

all the mischief they could. Montrose answered that he was well aware that Huntly had many enemies among the Covenanters, but that he should not fail in any part of his word; "only," he added, "there is this difficulty, that business here is all transacted by a vote and a committee, nor can I get anything done of myself." He had already done so much, it was urged, that he might well go on with the rest. He was in command, and if he stood firm the others must give way. "I shall do my utmost for Huntly's satisfaction," was the answer, and with this assurance the Marquis and his friends were suffered to depart.

Their doubts were soon verified. Montrose returned to Aberdeen, where he was joined by Murray, Seaforth, the Master of Lovat, and other zealous Covenanters with a body of cavalry. Encouraged by these reinforcements, Huntly's enemies were soon at work. A council of war was held; it was agreed that the General had been too lenient with a dangerous man, and the Marquis was requested to repair to Aberdeen under a promise of safe conduct. How far Montrose was directly responsible for what followed it is hard to decide. That he had promised more than he was at the time confident of being able to perform is clear; but it is by no means so clear that he did not do his utmost to keep his promise, and it is unreasonable to brand him with treachery because he was not strong enough to carry the day single-handed against the vote and the committee. Yet though he may have meant to deal honestly with Huntly, when he found himself overborne in the council he certainly seems to have shown little hesitation in acting as the agent of those who had no such scruples. After a

series of trifling and vexatious conditions had been offered and refused, it was intimated that the Marquis would do well to return with them to Edinburgh. Conscious that he was in a trap Huntly first asked that his bond should be restored to him. When this had been done, he asked if he was to go as a prisoner or as a free man. "Make your choice," said Montrose shortly. "Then," was the answer, "I will not go as a prisoner, but as a volunteer." Whatever share Montrose may have had in this double dealing he was destined to pay dear for it on a later day. The Marquis never really forgave him; and their subsequent alliance proved costlier to Montrose and to the King than their present enmity proved to Huntly.

Montrose marched south with his prize on April 13th, leaving Aberdeen in charge of a committee composed of the Gordons' bitterest foes. Immediately on his arrival at Edinburgh, Huntly was brought before the Tables and pressed to subscribe the Covenant. "You may take my head from my shoulders," was his answer, "but not my heart from my sovereign." He was at once sent as a prisoner to the Castle, with his heir Lord Gordon who had accompanied him from Aberdeen. His second son, Lord Aboyne, should also have been there, but he had been allowed by Montrose to return home on parole to procure money and other necessaries for the journey, and when safe within his own borders had easily been persuaded to break his word with men who had shown so little care of their own. The House of Gordon, said his kinsmen, could not be left without a head at such a crisis. Lord Lewis, the third son, was too young, and it devolved therefore on him to play his father's part,

and to keep the King's flag flying in the midst of traitors and rebels.

Montrose reached Edinburgh on April 20th. On May 1st Hamilton anchored in the Firth of Forth with nineteen sail, five thousand men, and some munitions of war. He came too late. Leith had been fortified. Fife and the Lothians were in arms to a man. Among the crowds who thronged the shore to stare at the English fleet came the old Dowager Countess of Hamilton, riding on horseback, with pistols at her saddle, and vowing, in a spirit worthy of her ancestor, the grim old Reforming Earl of Glencairn, to shoot her son dead with her own hand should he dare to set a hostile foot on Scottish soil. A stouter heart than Hamilton's might well have shrunk from the prospect before him. His men were raw English peasants, without drill or discipline and careless of the cause for which they had been armed with weapons of whose use they were ignorant. Opposed to them was a people as well equipped and better officered, inflamed with the belief that their religion and liberties were at stake, and resolute to accept no compromise till both had been secured. Present action was plainly impossible; but useful time might be gained by diplomacy, which, if it could effect nothing else, might serve to remind the Covenanters that Hamilton, though circumstances had placed him at the head of an English army, was still at heart a Scotsman. He therefore landed his men on the little islands of Inchcolm and Inchkeith, where they could be taught at least how to handle their muskets, opened negotiations with the enemy, and commenced a lugubrious correspondence with the King.

Meanwhile Aboyne had gone south to find Charles, and had met him at Newcastle. The spirited young fellow undertook to raise his father's vassals, if some help in men and money were forthcoming. Money there was none, but some of the men now lying idle in the Forth might be available. Aboyne was therefore sent back to Scotland with instructions to Hamilton to furnish him with what troops he could spare; but before he could reach the fleet the position of affairs had again changed. The Gordons had risen without waiting for their young chief, had scattered the Covenanting garrison in a skirmish popularly known as the Trot of Turriff (which marks the virtual beginning of the Civil War), and had re-occupied Aberdeen. Montrose had marched north again with a force of four thousand men. And Hamilton, on whom the eyes of all Royalists and Covenanters in Scotland were now anxiously turned, had sent two out of his three regiments south to swell the army Charles was now laboriously mustering at York!

This inexplicable movement had been made by the King's order, but on Hamilton's advice. That advice had been given on May 21st, seven days after the Gordons had risen. The order had been sent on the 23rd, and on the next day Charles learned the news from Aberdeen. His position was undoubtedly serious. Leslie was advancing to the Border with an army which, though less than rumour made it at Newcastle, was far larger than the force Charles had as yet been able to collect, far readier and far more eager to fight. But it is clear that such reinforcements as Hamilton could furnish, while they could have availed little against the

trained and resolute troops of Leslie, had been invaluable in the North, where the war was as yet rather feudal than national, where the forces on both sides were small and disorganised, and where five thousand men, however unskilful, would have been sufficient to turn the scale on either side. The Royalists held Aberdeen from the 15th to the 20th of May. Had Hamilton joined them before the latter day it would have been necessary to place a larger force at Montrose's disposal, and Leslie's march to the Border must have been checked for the time. But for three weeks the King's lieutenant seems to have remained in complete ignorance that the King's loyal subjects were in arms for him within less than a hundred miles. We have seen that the rising was known at Newcastle on the 24th. It was known in Edinburgh, it was known even to Huntly in his prison, before the regiments had left the Forth. Yet the one man then in Scotland whom it most concerned to know these things for his master's sake, who alone in Scotland had the means and the warrant to profit by the knowledge, who was at liberty to come and go, to receive messengers and to despatch them, who knew that the young Gordon was in communication with the King, who had some experience of military affairs, and who, with all his faults, has never been called a coward, sat idly through all that precious time apparently in complete ignorance of events with which all the country round him was ringing. He was still ignorant of them when Aboyne arrived in the Forth on the 29th. Hamilton was profuse in regrets and courtesies. Men he had none to spare; but he entertained his young friend sumptuously on board his own ship, with discharge of cannon at every health, after

the fashion once in vogue at the Court of Denmark, presented him with a few small field-pieces, and an officer whom he warranted to be of the highest skill, courage, and experience, and who vindicated this praise by earning among the Royalists the name of Traitor Gun. Two days later news arrived from Aberdeen, and Aboyne at once sailed north with these valuable succours. Some vague promises were indeed held out to him of possible reinforcements, if they could be spared from England; and it seems that Hamilton, on Aboyne's arrival, had written for more troops, a request which, immediately following the arrival of those he had just parted with, must have considerably puzzled his unfortunate master. That he might possibly have done better to accompany the lad with his remaining regiment than to stay in a place where he had confessed himself unable to be of any service does not appear to have entered into Hamilton's head.

Meanwhile Montrose had reached Aberdeen, and found his work already done. The loyal barons, without any organisation or military skill, and finding no help where they looked for it in the South, had retreated before the Earl Marischal, and the luckless city was once more in the hands of the Covenant. Now at least the punishment which it had twice so righteously deserved would surely not be withheld. The ministers, who had as usual accompanied the troops, pressed Montrose to give up to pillage the degenerate town which had for the second time refused to come to the help of the Lord against the mighty. But again Montrose disappointed them. Some violence there was and some plundering. The day after his arrival was Sunday, and while he and

his officers were at their devotions the soldiers busied themselves in less orthodox fashion. One particular act of wanton cruelty was long remembered. After the Covenanters' last visit the good dames of Aberdeen, allowing their zeal to outrun their judgment, as is sometimes still the wont of female politicians, decked their dogs with blue ribbons in scorn of the rebel colours. Furious at this profanation of their precious symbol the soldiers slaughtered every poor brute they could lay hands on. But on the morrow the General took strict order with his men. A fine of ten thousand marks was laid upon the city. If the money was paid by eleven o'clock on the following day, no further harm should be done; if not, Aberdeen would be given up to plunder. This money was paid punctually, and Aberdeen was spared.

Two days later, on May 30th, Montrose marched north to punish the Gordons. The castle of Gicht was his first point. But Gicht was strong, its defenders were resolute and skilful, and the Covenanters had no siege-train. For two days and nights Montrose battered the walls in vain, and then fell back, or leaped back as his fashion was, on Aberdeen. He had heard that Aboyne was on the sea, and never doubted that Hamilton was with him, for Montrose had left Edinburgh before the English troops had sailed for Holy Island. If a superior force got between him and the capital it might fare hard with both, and his own was not what it had been. Many of his men had deserted, disgusted—so Baillie hints, and probably with truth, for the Highlander was not alone then in holding free quarters and indiscriminate pillage to be an essential part of warfare—at their

General's misplaced humanity. Resting his army for a day in Aberdeen, he marched south on June 4th.

The day after his departure Aboyne dropped anchor in the Dee. Two vessels of sixteen guns each and a Newcastle collier composed his fleet. His fighting force consisted of a few young gentlemen as inexperienced as himself, the field-pieces he had brought from the Forth, and the vaunted Gun. For some days he lay in the harbour, in the vain hope of more aid from Hamilton; but the only result of the delay was the defection of some of his comrades whose loyalty was not proof against inaction. An ally, however, appeared from another quarter. His brother, Lord Lewis, a madcap boy of thirteen, marched into Aberdeen on June 7th at the head of a thousand of his father's retainers, with pipes sounding, drums beating, and flags flying. Fired at this gallant display the citizens mustered to arms, and on June 14th Aboyne took the field with a somewhat miscellaneous army of four thousand men.

Meanwhile Montrose and Marischal had joined forces at Stonehaven. Their numbers were vastly inferior to Aboyne's, and they were ill supplied with cannon. So little did they like the prospect that they had thoughts of intrenching themselves in Marischal's strong castle of Dunnottar. But Gun's folly, or, as some said, his treachery, came to their aid. Within a mile of Stonehaven he turned off from the high road and drew up his men on an open heath exposed to the full fire of Montrose's guns. Fortunately for Aboyne they were not many; but they were more than enough for the Highlanders. They could not face the musket's mother, as they called the cannon, and at the first discharge they

broke and fled. The citizens followed them, raising a cry of *Treachery!* Only the cavalry stood firm, gallant gentlemen of the house of Gordon, and masking this ignominious scene enabled Aboyne to fall back on Aberdeen without pursuit.

Hitherto Montrose's victories had been bloodless. He had shown, indeed, all the qualities of a great captain that circumstances had permitted—decision, promptness, activity; but he had not yet come to blows with an enemy. The time was now at hand for him to show his metal in hard fighting.

Aboyne was in a bad plight. The Highlanders were in hot flight back to their mountains. The most part of his artillery and ammunition was on board ship, and the ships were out of reach. The sapient Gun had recommended that the little fleet should keep a course parallel to the land route, and that the heavy guns and ammunition should be sent on board not to cumber the march. But the ships had been blown out to sea, and were now no one knew where. Still the gallant young fellow did not despair. There was the chivalry of his House, six hundred strong, well mounted and armed. The citizens were ashamed of themselves and afraid of Montrose, who they knew would be soon at their gates. Under these combined feelings they rallied to the vigorous call of Colonel Johnston, their provost's son, and mustered round their young leader.

Montrose had only waited to bring up some heavier guns from Dunnottar. On the 17th an advanced party of his troopers encountered an equal number of the Gordon horse within six miles of the town, and were beaten back with the loss of two men. The Gordons were led

by the gallant Johnston, who implored Aboyne to let him advance with the whole body of his cavalry. The advice seemed good to all but Gun, and Aboyne, in the face of repeated warnings, still listened to Gun.

Yet the prospect was far from hopeless. The Dee was in flood, and the only approach was by the bridge, a fine structure of seven arches, two miles distant from the city. This had been hastily fortified. The gate at the southern end had been closed and strengthened with turf and earth; the roadway was lined with stout citizens who knew how to handle a musket. Johnston was in command, and the cavalry were gathered on the farther bank, ready to act should the passage be forced. On the morning of the 18th the attack commenced. Montrose had planted his artillery on a hill a few hundred yards south of the bridge, and under a hot cannonade the Covenanters advanced to the assault. But the guns made more noise than execution, and the Aberdonians were no Highland caterans to be frightened by noise. Twice the assailants fought their way on to the bridge-head, and twice they were beaten back by Johnston and his musketeers. Some companies from Dundee, which had ever been jealous of Aberdeen, made a special request to Montrose to be allowed to try their hands. He bade them go on in the name of the Covenant. But so hot was the fire that met them, and so grim looked the ranks of horsemen on the other side, that they wavered and broke before the gate was reached, amid the jeers of the citizens who, like the three Romans on the bridge at Janiculum, bade their rivals welcome to Aberdeen. The spirit of the city rose high. All ranks swore to stand their ground to the

last; and women, bringing meat and drink down to their gallant defenders, moved about unshrinking amid the storm of shot and the shouts of the combatants. All day the fight raged, and when the sun fell the Covenanters were forced to own themselves as far from Aberdeen as ever.

But his countrymen had now to learn that Montrose was one whose courage and resource only rose higher in the face of defeat. During the night he brought two of his heaviest guns up to the gate of the bridge. In the early morning the assault recommenced. A few discharges from this new battery soon cleared away the rude defences. At the same time Montrose ordered a body of horse to move up the river as though they had found a ford. Gun at once ordered a counter-demonstration. He was told that there was no ford, that the river was passable only by the bridge, and that so long as that was held the city was safe. His only answer was a threat to throw up his commission if his orders were not obeyed. Aboyne yielded to his evil genius once more, and this time with fatal results. As the Gordons moved up the river, Montrose ordered a general assault. Middleton led the way—a rough soldier of fortune, whose name appears now for the first time in the history of a country destined to know it well hereafter. Still the defenders fought bravely, and while Johnston was at their head the issue was still doubtful. But a cannon-shot dislodged a part of the parapet of the bridge that fell upon Johnston and crushed his leg. He was with difficulty extricated and carried into the town. A cry rose that he was dead. The citizens, without their brave leader, lost heart and gave way. The cavalry, returning

from their bootless ride, might have charged the Covenanters home as they streamed in disorder across the bridge; but Gun, swearing that all was lost, gave the signal for flight. "The Gordons never leave the field without charging," said one of them. Another called Gun a coward and a traitor to his face. But the instinct of safety was too strong. The citizens were in flight on all sides, and the chivalry of the Gordons turned their horses' heads north, and galloped off to Strathbogie with their young chief and the wretched Gun in the midst of them. Montrose had won his first battle.

He was determined, however, to save Aberdeen, and he succeeded after a hard struggle. Scarcely were they within the walls when Marischal and the Frasers were urgent with him to give the city up to fire and pillage, in obedience, as they reminded him, to the warrant of his orders. Montrose bade them sleep a night on the matter. Aberdeen, he said, was a great city, the London of the North, and would be of more value to the Covenant and the country as it stood than when laid smoking in ruins. He was successful in persuading his colleagues not only to adopt his milder measures, but also to sign a paper admitting their share in this disregard of the Covenant's orders. Even then the passions of a victorious soldiery might have prevailed. They had already seized and imprisoned those whom they could recognise as having been most forward in the defence, and had committed other acts of violence. But in the moment of time came the news of the Pacification at Berwick, which had been actually signed on the 18th during the heat of the fight at the bridge. This set the

matter at rest. A fine, for the second time within the month, was imposed on the city: the prisoners were set at liberty; and Montrose, withdrawing his army to a safe distance, disbanded it on the terms of the treaty.

CHAPTER V

THE SECOND BISHOPS' WAR

THE word pacification can hardly have deceived even the most sanguine advocates of peace. None who knew the character of Charles or of the Scottish nation can have believed in their hearts that any final solution to the quarrel between them had been found at Berwick. It was at most a truce; and it was soon made clear how short and hollow a truce it was destined to be. The Pacification was signed on June 10th, and before the year was out both sides were arming fast again for war.

It was the old story. Charles had refused to recognise the acts of the Glasgow Assembly, as indeed he could not but have refused while he called himself King of Scotland; but he had agreed that a lawful Assembly should be convened in August at which all the ecclesiastical points at issue should be settled, and that a Parliament should follow to make the settlement good. It had been his intention to preside in person at both meetings, but the temper of the Scottish capital made him hesitate. Almost immediately after the Pacification he had issued one of his foolish proclamations, summoning the bishops to take their places in the forthcoming Assembly. A protestation

of course followed. Charles was indeed within his legal rights, for Episcopacy had as yet been abolished only by the Glasgow Assembly, which he had refused to acknowledge and which the Covenanters had agreed not to press. But though Episcopacy had not yet been legally abolished, Charles, by renewing the assurances made in his name by Hamilton at Glasgow, had given his word for its abolition. Within a fortnight of this solemn promise he had issued a proclamation which, if there were any meaning in words, could mean only one of two things; he was summoning the bishops to vote for their own extinction, or he was summoning them to quash the motion for their extinction by their own votes. It is no wonder that the Scottish people, with their previous experience of the royal diplomacy, chose the latter interpretation, and, finding that the King was breaking his share of the treaty, made no haste to keep theirs. The army was not disbanded; the Tables were not dissolved; the fortifications of Leith were not dismantled. The fortresses were indeed restored to the Crown, but Hamilton had to make his way through sullen and menacing crowds to install a new governor in Edinburgh Castle. A few days later Aboyne, who had imprudently shown himself on the High Street, was forced to fly for his life, while the unfortunate Treasurer was for the second time roughly handled by the mob. Charles, who was still at Berwick, sent in anger for the Covenanting leaders to explain these things. Only six obeyed the summons. The rest were stopped, or pretended to have been stopped, as they were leaving Edinburgh, by the citizens, who would not suffer their champions to place themselves in the King's power. But among the six was Montrose.

It is an infinite pity that no report exists of any interview between Montrose and the King during this visit. We know that Hamilton was instructed to confer with the Covenanting chiefs, and to use any device necessary to discover their intentions. We know that there was a stormy scene between Charles and Rothes, in which the latter was twice called a liar to his face. But how it fared between Montrose and his sovereign history is silent. How it was believed in Scotland to have fared between them is sufficiently shown by an incident which occurred soon after the meeting of Parliament. A paper was found one morning on the door of Montrose's lodgings bearing the inscription, *Invictus armis verbis vincitur*. It began now to be whispered abroad that the gallant young enthusiast who had led the soldiers of the Covenant to their first victory had in his turn been conquered by gracious looks and fair speeches.

The belief was natural in a society where no man could trust his neighbour. And there was possibly this much foundation for it, that Charles had succeeded in persuading Montrose that he was now really sincere in his intention to abolish Episcopacy and leave Scotland free to worship God after her own fashion. It is at least unlikely that Hamilton, whatever language he might speak, should have persuaded him to anything. And the change that is now perceptible in Montrose's attitude both towards King and Covenant is compatible with our belief in his intelligence and honesty only on the ground that he believed the work of the Covenant, as he interpreted it, to have been done, that he believed Charles to have learnt his lesson,

and that thenceforth it was the part of every true Scotsman to stand by the King so long as the King stood by his word.

But in truth Montrose understood his countrymen as little as he understood the King. He had framed for himself an ideal constitution as unlike anything possible in such a country and at such a time as the ideal sovereign of his imagination was unlike the reality. His political views were in truth a dream like Dante's, but, like the great Italian's, a dream based on what had been in the past, and an anticipation in part at least of what was to be again in the future,—the dream of a real State, a government based on justice and law and supported by obedience. A parallel has been drawn between Montrose and that singularly interesting and attractive man, William Drummond of Hawthornden. Fanciful as the resemblance may at first seem between the fiery ambitious man of action and the shy meditative man of letters, the parallel is on one side good. Drummond, it is said, was a passive or theoretical Montrose, Montrose a rampant or practical Drummond. The latter's *Irene* indeed embodies, in more elaborate detail and more fanciful language, the peculiar form of Scottish Conservatism which Montrose was afterwards to express in a remarkable paper rescued by the industry of his biographer from two centuries of neglect. The plan of each discourse is very similar. Both draw a picture of the hopeless state of anarchy and confusion into which Scotland must fall if certain evil counsels prevail. Montrose, writing later in time and influenced by personal dislike as well as disappointment, aims clearly at Hamilton and Argyll; while Drummond includes in his

censure all the noblemen who had joined the Covenant, and Montrose among them, openly accusing the majority of acting solely under the influence of private revenge and ambition. Both then proceed to appeal to each Estate particularly, to the nobles, the clergy, and the people. In both is the same recognition of the necessity for a paramount authority in the State, and the conviction that from the temper of the times that authority must be vested in the hands of a king. In both is the same dislike of all clerical interference, whether Episcopalian or Presbyterian, in matters of State. Both show the same mistrust of any alliance between the aristocracy and the people. Both warn the latter in almost the same strain that they are not fit for power, and that the nobles who would persuade them otherwise can do so only for their own selfish ends. Both, in short, may be said to preach the doctrine of passive obedience; but both imagine a king under whose wise and beneficent rule passive obedience should mean no more than happy and prosperous quiescence in the secure enjoyment of their religion and liberties. Of the two Drummond was readiest to push his doctrine to its last conclusion, as the man of theory always will be. Resolved on no consideration and in no extremity to suffer himself to be dragged into the vortex of politics, in the solitude of his beautiful home on the wooded banks of the Esk he could weave his fairy fabric without any disturbing sense of its impracticability. Montrose, with his active experience of men and things, could not quite blind himself to the possibility of a king under whom passive obedience might be only another name for tyranny. Yet he was practical to this extent, that, while the other

was content to dream, he was ready to put his dream into action. He would carry into the sphere of working politics the reform on which they were both agreed. He would be the active exponent of the ideal Constitution under Charles the ideal King. Yet both are at one in recommending the subject patience even under the worst sovereign. It is better, they argue, to bear the ills we have and trust to time to cure them, than to fly to others we know nothing of. And of all forms of tyranny, says Montrose, the tyranny of subjects over their king is "the most fierce, insatiable, and unsupportable in the world." Drummond, who could on occasion speak boldly enough for the liberty of the subject, and who disliked religious intolerance in any shape and from any quarter, foresaw that in this respect at least the Covenant was likely to chastise with scorpions where Charles had chastised with whips. Passive obedience to a king who had shown himself (as he, like Montrose, believed) ready to remove the old yoke and resolved to add no new one, was surely more tolerable than passive obedience to a league of self-seeking nobles and fanatical clergymen.[1]

In the summer of 1639 Montrose had not formally broken with the Covenant, nor was his scheme of political reform probably as yet fully matured. Nevertheless, he was soon to have an opportunity of making trial of

[1] See *Memoirs of Montrose*, chap. xv., and Professor Masson's *Drummond of Hawthornden*, pp. 272-287 and 343-348. The *Irene* was not published in Drummond's lifetime, but copies were freely circulated in manuscript towards the latter end of 1638. Mr. Masson thinks that the *Noble Lord* to whom one of the copies was sent, with a note containing the significant words, "Force hath less power over a great heart than duty," may have been Montrose; and Mark Napier thinks that the *Noble Sir* to whom Montrose addressed his state-paper

his countrymen's temper, and of learning how utterly he had misconceived it.

The first act of the new Assembly was to sweep Episcopacy off the face of Scottish earth. The first act of the new Parliament was to ratify the decision of the Assembly. But before it could effect this ecclesiastical reform it had to consider a question of political reform which was infinitely more important to the King's authority. Hitherto the committee known as the Lords of the Articles had been so formed as to be practically no more than the mouthpiece of the Crown; and as no bills could be presented to Parliament till they had passed this committee, and, when so presented, could only be accepted or rejected in their entirety without amendment or alteration, it is clear that the power of the Scottish Parliament as a national assembly was little more than a cipher. This state of things was due to the influence possessed by the bishops in the formation of the committee. But now that the bishops had gone, by whom was this influence to be exercised? Charles would have been glad to see it exercised by a corresponding number of ministers, who might at some more tranquil time be translated into bishops. But this was obnoxious to all parties. The nobles would not consent to share their power with the clergy, and the clergy would not consent to see any of their order elevated above

may have been Drummond. The paper was found by Napier in a volume of transcripts in Wodrow's handwriting in the Advocates' Library, where it must have lain for many years unread and apparently unsuspected. Wodrow himself has made no allusion to it in his *Analecta*, nor has any subsequent writer noticed it on either side. In short, from the time it was written (1640-1641) till Napier published his biography, it has never entered history.

the rest. Business was made possible by a compromise; but as the compromise entailed a majority of Covenanters on the committee, the business was not palatable to the King. It was now that the two great rivals, Montrose and Argyll, were first brought into direct conflict. Montrose would not support Charles in filling the bishops' places with other clergymen, though they should wear the black gown of Geneva instead of the hated lawn-sleeves. But he had no mind to see the authority of the Crown a cipher, and the King without a voice among the new Lords of the Articles. He proposed, therefore, that the bishops' places should be taken by a corresponding number of noblemen to be chosen by the King. In his ideal State the Crown and the nobility should mutually support and counterpoise each other, both acting together against the dangerous encroachments of the people. Far different were Argyll's views. With clearer eyes than Montrose he read the signs of the times, and saw what the victory of the Covenant really meant. He saw that it meant the inevitable rise of the middle classes to a share in the control of public affairs. He saw that the old monarchical supremacy and the old aristocratic supremacy were alike doomed, and that henceforth his order, if it would retain any vestige of its ancient influence, could do so only by acquiescing in a partition it was powerless to prevent. Henceforth the Scottish Parliament, like the English Parliament, must represent the voice, not of the sovereign, but of the people. Nor was this recognition unpleasing to an ambition far other and more dangerous than the generous desire for fame which swelled the heart of Montrose. As a member of the old aristocracy

he was but one among many, richer, indeed, and more powerful than most, but subject like the rest to the caprice of a king, and to the jealousy, the intrigues, and the violence of his peers. But with a national Parliament at his back, speaking and acting as the mouthpiece and agent of a people, he might rise in fact to that power his countrymen would no longer brook in name. Conscious of mental abilities and a genius for statecraft immeasurably superior to those around him, he felt confident of wielding to his own ends this new force that he saw rising on the ruins of the old. And Argyll carried the day, though not without a hard struggle. By a majority of only one it was determined that in future each Estate should choose its own Lords. Henceforth the nobles would be represented by eight votes, the lesser barons and burghers by sixteen; and thus at one stroke the voice of the sovereign was silenced in the Scottish Parliament. In the first direct struggle between Montrose and Argyll there could be no doubt with whom victory rested. Under their new constitution the Covenanting majority carried all before them. Episcopacy was abolished, not, as Charles would have had, as contrary to the usage of the Scottish Church, but as actually unlawful. A general tax was to be levied, to cover the expenses of the late war, on Royalists as well as on Covenanters. The castles of Edinburgh, Stirling, and Dumbarton were to be entrusted to the charge of none but Scottish subjects, who, though chosen by the King, were to be approved by Parliament. No more drastic Reform Bill has, in short, been passed even in our own century. Charles at once sent orders to Traquair to prorogue a Parliament under which the very

existence of the Crown was at stake. The Treasurer was at once met with the answer that Parliament could not be prorogued without its own consent. A short adjournment was therefore arranged, and two Covenanting lords, Loudon and Dunfermline, were despatched to plead their case in London.

Charles had been informed of Montrose's action during this momentous time by that Earl of Airth whose disgrace and subsequent reinstatement has been already mentioned. The result was a summons to Court for the repentant Covenanter. But Montrose excused himself on the ground that the visit would breed suspicion both of himself and of the King, and so tend to prevent the accommodation of existing difficulties which they both desired. "I hope," he wrote, "that your Majesty will do me the honour to think that this is no shift,—for all of that kind is too much contrary to my humour, chiefly in what your Majesty or your service is concerned in—but that, as I have ever been bold to avow, there are no things your Majesty shall be pleased to command me in—persuading myself they will be still such as befits and do suit with all most incumbent duties—that I shall not think myself born to perform as your Majesty's most loyal and faithful subject and servant."

These things passed in the autumn of 1639. The winter wore itself out in barren diplomacies and preparations for war on both sides. The Scottish Commissioners could do nothing with the King, and Parliament was prorogued till the following June. Strafford was now supreme in the royal councils, and that imperious voice was never for submission. At this time,

moreover, a discovery was made which gave fresh weight to Strafford's arguments and fresh heart to his perplexed master. A letter had fallen into Traquair's hands addressed by some of the leading Covenanters to the French King, praying him to come to their aid. This, it was thought, would surely establish the treasonable nature of the Scottish movement. But when the letter was read before the English Parliament, which met on April 13th, it made no impression on either House. Both were too intent on their own affairs—the pressing question of Ship-Money among others—to interfere in a matter which, so far as it concerned them at all, made for their own interests. The Scottish Covenanters were the very good neighbours of the English malcontents, and no obstacle was to be put in their way to work out their own salvation. Lewis, to whom a second letter had been addressed on the miscarriage of the first, was too cautious to enter into a quarrel which could be safely trusted to shape itself to his own gain. Loudon, who was then in London as one of the Commissioners, and whose name was subscribed to the letter, was indeed sent to the Tower on a charge of treasonable conspiracy; but nothing could be brought home to him, and he was soon released. Parliament did not choose to adopt Charles's interpretation of words that could be strained to bear a less criminal significance; and the affair passed quickly out of sight.[1]

[1] The letter was addressed *au Roi*, and this, it was argued by the Lord Keeper, implied that the writers recognised Lewis as their king, that style being only used by subjects to their sovereign. This seems an unnecessary point to have raised. The letter was plainly an appeal for aid from France by subjects of the English King, and as such came certainly within the range of a treasonable

Among the signatories to the French King was Montrose. Whether this was done to lull the growing suspicions of his colleagues, or done through fresh mistrust of Charles's clerical policy, it is hard to determine. Probably both motives were at work in a mind that could as yet see firm ground nowhere. At all events, when on reassembling in June the Scottish Parliament aimed a further blow at the royal authority by the appointment of a permanent Committee of Estates with supreme power both in military and civil matters, Montrose was named among the noblemen, with his kinsmen, Napier and Stirling, among the lesser barons. In obedience to the orders of this new power he at once proceeded to his own territories to levy men for the army a second time mustering under Leslie for the Border. While engaged in this business he was commissioned to effect the reduction of Airlie Castle, the main stronghold of the loyalists in the shire of Angus. The chief of the Ogilvies, lately raised to the earldom of Airlie, was then with the King, having left his house in charge of his eldest son. The work was accomplished without resort to arms or any violence. Lord Ogilvy, after conference with the commissioner, rendered his father's castle quietly, being in truth in no position to defend it, for the good of the public, as the convenient phrase ran; and Montrose, leaving a garrison of his own men in charge of it, marched south to join Leslie.

Unfortunately for the loyal North, and most un-

correspondence. Loudon's assertion that he did not understand French, and that so far as he knew the letter was perfectly harmless, was sheer impudence. The indifference of Parliament proves how good was the understanding between England and Scotland, and how helpless Charles really was.

fortunately for the House of Airlie, others besides Montrose had been entrusted with the charge of "pacification." Commissions had been also issued for that purpose to Monro, one of the roughest and most brutal pupils of the German wars, and to Argyll. To Monro was assigned the district of Aberdeen, while Argyll was to take order with the more southern Highlands. Commissions of fire and sword the style ran, and seldom can it have been more literally vindicated. Monro harried Aberdeen and the surrounding country, destroying what he could not remove, putting some of the citizens to torture after a fashion practised in his school of war, and carrying back a crowd of prisoners to Edinburgh. Argyll did his work even more thoroughly. Montrose had advised him of the surrender of Airlie Castle, and that all was now quiet on the braes of Angus. But not thus was Argyll to be balked of his vengeance. Between the Campbells and the Ogilvies there had been feud for many generations, and so rare a chance of masking private vengeance under the cloak of duty was not to be lost. Montrose's garrison was dismissed, and the Bonny House of Airlie burned to the ground. Forthar, the seat of Lord Ogilvy, was next served in the same fashion, the young lord's wife, who was then daily expecting her confinement, being turned out of doors, her own family only venturing at their own risk, and after permission had been asked and refused, to shelter the unhappy outcast. Craig, an unfortified building, and therefore not rightly within this strange peacemaker's commission, but also the property of an Ogilvy, shared the same fate. Argyll next turned his attention to the lands of Breadalbane, but

finding his way barred by Athole with a force almost amounting to one-fourth of his own, he preferred to effect by diplomacy what he dared not put to the trial of the sword. Athole, unmindful of the fate of Huntly, was caught in the same snare. Under promise of a safe-conduct he was persuaded with his captains to meet Argyll in conference. The conference was an ambuscade. The whole party were seized and sent as prisoners to Edinburgh. Then, after settling a long-standing account with the Macdonalds, against whom he held a twofold grudge as hereditary foes of his House and as friends and in some sort vassals of the House of Gordon, and laying Badenoch waste from Lochaber to Braemar, this great warrior returned in triumph to Edinburgh to impeach Montrose for treason against the Covenant in dealing too leniently with its enemies.

From this ridiculous charge Montrose found little difficulty in exonerating himself. Argyll would have had him tried by court-martial, but neither Leslie nor the Committee of Estates would entertain the proposal, and Montrose was unanimously pronounced to have done his duty as a true soldier of the Covenant. But he had now far more serious matter for thought than this paltry ebullition of temper. While in Leslie's camp at Dunse a proposal was submitted to him, which of all men in Scotland he was the last to hear calmly. Already there had been some secret debate among the extreme party of the right of subjects to depose a faithless king, and Argyll had already maintained in Parliament the right of the Estates to pass laws without the royal sanction. How far matters had gone Montrose did not yet know, but he had other grounds than mere

pique for suspecting Argyll and his faction of some deep design against the King's authority. The plan now submitted to him confirmed his worst suspicions. It inflamed his jealousy of Argyll, while threatening to break for ever the dream he still cherished of placing Charles at the head of a constitutional government with a Presbyterian Church. The precise details of the scheme are rather obscure; for when it afterwards became matter of public inquiry, those most directly concerned repudiated all knowledge of it. There seem in fact to have been more than one scheme, that submitted to Montrose having been chosen as least likely to alarm his inconvenient loyalty, while at the same time offering a sop to his ambition by assigning him a share in the executive. According to this the government of Scotland was to be placed in the hands of a Triumvirate, consisting of Argyll, Mar, and Cassillis. Argyll was to rule all the lands beyond the Forth, while the southern counties were to be in charge of his colleagues. A committee or council was to work with the Triumvirate, and in this Montrose's name had been inserted. But though the particulars of the various schemes may have differed, they all practically tended to the same end. Whether he was to stand alone, an absolute dictator, or to be one of a nominal council, Argyll was the only man who could save Scotland in her present straits.

But Montrose had a party as well as Argyll. Besides the few who, like Napier and Stirling, looked to him as their head, there were many who, while not sharing his sanguine loyalty, and perhaps not altogether trusting him, were agreed with him that the time had come when the Covenant needed to be saved from itself.

They were indeed in much the same predicament as Montrose himself, though his peculiar temperament and aspiring genius made impossible for him what was merely troublesome for men of commoner mould. They had subscribed the Covenant not to destroy their king, but to save their religion. They had subscribed it, in short, without sufficiently considering whether it must inevitably lead them among such a people and at such a time, unless Charles were to undergo some marvellous change in his nature and ideas which only dreamers could hope for, and which, it is not too much to say, no man then wearing a crown was likely to undergo. To dethrone Charles merely to set up Argyll in his place was to their taste neither as Scotsmen nor Covenanters. To this party Montrose determined to appeal. A conversation held with Lindsay during a hasty visit to Edinburgh convinced him that this idea of a dictatorship was no mere fancy of Argyll's ambitious brain, nor promoted only by his creatures.

> In seasons of great peril
> 'Tis good that one bear sway.

Almost in these words, and using this very illustration from the practice of ancient Rome, did Lindsay in private approve a scheme of which he afterwards publicly disowned all knowledge. Montrose accordingly resolved to play these men at their own game, and to form a counter-plot in the interests of Scotland, her Covenant, and her King. This was the origin of the secret alliance known as the Cumbernauld Bond, from the place where it was signed, the house of Montrose's uncle Lord Wigton. "Montrose's damnable

bond," Baillie calls it, "by which he thought to have sold us to the enemy;" but he is careful not to quote it, nor to give the names of the subscribers. Among them were Mar, the governor of Stirling Castle, Almond, Leslie's second in command on the Border, and Erskine, whose accession to the cause Baillie had welcomed but a short while since as a signal instance of God's mercy. The presence of such names sufficiently proves the genuine nature of the bond, and disposes of the assertion that it was merely designed by Montrose to further his own personal aggrandisement or in treachery to the Covenant. The purpose of its subscribers is plainly declared in the clause levelled against the "particular and indirect practising of a few," by which the Covenant that they had signed and pledged themselves anew to promote "to the hazard of their lives, fortunes, and estates," was now brought into danger, and with the Covenant the country. That Argyll and his scheme of dictatorship were the danger ahead was of course understood by all who signed; but this danger was as manifest to Mar, Almond, and Erskine as to Montrose.

Having thus, as he supposed, provided the means of checkmating Argyll and his faction, Montrose returned to the army. He found it on the point of entering England. The spot chosen was the ford over the Tweed at Coldstream. It was a strange irony of fate that twenty years later led another army southwards by the same ford to restore to his throne the exiled King for whom Montrose had given his life, and against whose father he was this day in arms! The river was in flood, and for three days the army halted on the

plain of Hirselhaugh. On August 20th the passage was practicable. But whether at the last moment they shrank from incurring the charge of rebellion against which they had all so strenuously protested, but which, when the Rubicon was once passed, they would no longer be able to avoid, or from a preconcerted plan to test Montrose's good faith, there was a strange unwillingness among the leaders to be the first to make the passage. It was agreed to cast lots. The lot fell on Montrose. Instantly he sprang from his horse, and entering the stream waded through waist-high to the farther bank. Then returning he led his division across. The whole army followed, each captain wading on foot at the head of his men. The passage was begun at four in the afternoon, and by midnight five-and-twenty thousand armed Scotchmen were encamped on English ground.

His earliest biographer, the loyal and affectionate Wishart, maintains that it was Montrose's purpose, when once fairly across the Border, to carry his own men over to the English camp; and that, if his friends had kept their faith, so large a part of the Scottish army had gone with him that the rest could have effected nothing. It is possible that some such plan may have crossed his mind for the moment. His own regiments, men of Perthshire and Forfarshire, raised under his own supervision and many of them his own tenants, would have followed whithersoever he chose to lead them. Nor is it impossible that many of his colleagues who, like him, had put their hands prematurely to the plough, and were now, like him, looking back, might have welcomed any opportunity of extricating them-

selves from a false position. But Wishart vouchsafes no authority for his statement. No hint of such a design is to be found elsewhere. It was not made a charge against Montrose during his trial before the Estates in the following year, though it is impossible to suppose that a secret shared by so many would not have leaked out when the tide had turned against its author. We may therefore suppose that the generous biographer was only endeavouring to find for an action which he conceived to need some explanation, an excuse which his own uncompromising loyalty would prevent him from seeing in its true light. Against treason treachery itself would in his eyes be fair. To Wishart the Covenant had always been an unlawful and impious league, masking under dishonest professions of reverence to God and King designs subversive of the authority of both. He had himself stood stoutly out against it from the first, for which he had been deprived of his ministry, despoiled of his property, and flung a prisoner into the Tolbooth. Such a man may be pardoned for failing to understand his hero's conduct at this crisis; he may be pardoned for being unable to appreciate the peculiar nature of that loyalty to the Throne which could allow a man to bear arms against its occupant. Even passive adherence to the Covenant was incompatible in his plain mind with duty to his King; he would have preferred to believe his hero capable of treachery to the rebels whose commission he had accepted, rather than of disloyalty to the monarch whom he professed to serve. But we must hope that Wishart was mistaken: and that if such a course of action at any time crossed Montrose's mind, he put it away from him

as unworthy of an honest man. Yet in truth it is not easy to reconcile Montrose's behaviour during the past few months with his presence in the army which was now at open war with its sovereign. The time was indeed critical enough to have perplexed an older and a cooler head. Even were he now convinced that to declare frankly for the King was the only course consistent with his duty to his country, to do so before he was strong enough to make his declaration good might for ever ruin his prospects of serving either country or King. By still siding with the Covenant he might yet be able to guide it to a sense of its true purpose. With what feelings Montrose saw the royal cavalry flying in disgraceful panic before his countrymen at Newburn, and Newcastle unbar its gates at the first sound of the Scottish drum, we cannot tell. That he bore his part like a brave and skilful captain we may be sure; but that figure wading sword in hand through the swollen waters of the Tweed is the sole glimpse of Montrose that history affords through the brief and inglorious campaign to which it has given the name of the Second Bishops' War. Once, indeed, he is mentioned in a way which suggests how keenly the Royalists kept their eyes on him both as a present foe and a possible friend. Writing to the King from Darlington on August 30th Strafford reports as the most significant item of news a rumour that Montrose had fallen in the affair at Newburn. His signature also appears, along with Leslie's, Almond's, and the rest of his principal colleagues, to one of those extraordinary documents in which the Covenanters still continued to profess their peaceful and loyal intentions. Of this

there will be more to say hereafter. For the present we may leave to the historian the narrative of the events which led to the Treaty of Ripon and to the King's second and last visit to Scotland. Montrose had pressed him to come; and when he came Montrose was a prisoner in the hands of their common enemies.

CHAPTER VI

THE PLOT AND THE INCIDENT

The suspicions which Montrose had managed to allay for a time in the field, now broke out against him with renewed force when arms once more gave place to diplomacy. While the Scots lay in garrison at Newcastle, letters passed freely between them and the English camp. Before crossing the Tweed a general order had been issued by Leslie that no communication should be held with the enemy except under his warrant. Anything in the nature of a secret correspondence was declared treasonable, and he who held it liable to the punishment of a traitor. With this offence Montrose was now charged. While the negotiations for the Treaty of Ripon were proceeding, word was brought to Leslie that a letter had gone from Montrose to the King which had never passed under the eyes of the Committee. How the secret was discovered is not clear. It may have been, as Wishart and other contemporaries have maintained, through the treachery of some member of the King's own household. It may have been through sheer accident, according to Burnet's story. The manner of the discovery is unimportant; the fact of the letter is certain. When taxed with it before the

Committee, Montrose made no attempt at denial or excuse. At once and boldly avowing what he had done, he challenged any man present to say that he had done wrong. He had written to the King, professing his obedience and loyalty. What then? Had they not all, but the other day, signed a humble petition to his majesty in the character of his most loyal and obedient subjects? Their articles of war forbade all secret correspondence with the enemy. What man among them would venture to call his sovereign an enemy? Did not the same articles declare that, "If any man shall open his mouth against the King's majesty's person or authority, or shall presume to touch his sacred person, he shall be punished as a traitor"? The Committee was in a strait. They knew that Montrose was fooling them, but they could not gainsay him. Leslie indeed, more apt at war than council and impatient of such nice distinctions, muttered that he had known princes lose their heads for less faults. But his colleagues dared not accept the alternative Montrose offered them. They could not deny the letter of their own law, and they did not feel strong enough to refuse his wide interpretation of its spirit. They were in truth in the uncomfortable position of being caught in their own snare.

But though victory was for the time with Montrose, it was but a momentary gleam. His enemies were ever on the watch to catch him tripping, and they soon found graver matter against him. In the following November the young Lord Boyd, Montrose's relation and one of the signatories of the Cumbernauld Bond, lay dying of a malignant fever. In his delirium he uttered some rambling words about a secret which, reported to

Argyll, were enough to put those quick wits on the track. Almond was then at his house at Callendar on leave from Newcastle, and from him Argyll soon contrived to learn all about the Bond and who had signed it. Montrose was at once summoned to Edinburgh to answer this new accusation of treason. He took the same course before the Estates that he had taken before the Committee at Newcastle. He avowed what he had done, and justified it by the dangers then threatening Scotland and the Covenant. There was hot debate, and some, especially among the clergymen, would have made it a capital offence. But Argyll knew that his party was not yet strong enough to carry matters with so high a hand. Montrose did not stand alone. Some good Covenanters had shared in his treason, Almond and Mar and Marischal. And there were others whom half Leslie's army would have marched on the capital to save or revenge. Montrose himself was quite as much feared as he was hated by his accusers. They knew he had many friends among the Covenanters, and suspected he might have more than they knew. He must be separated from them before it would be safe to proceed to extremities against him. Moreover there were some who still thought it might not be too late to win this high spirit and ready genius to their side. He was ambitious, and events might so shape their course that the Covenant would be able to feed his ambition more liberally than the King. So this offence too was passed over. The Bond was surrendered and burned: the subscribers signed a declaration that they had meant nothing by it against the common weal; and once again the Covenant was outwardly at peace with itself.

But even after these two warnings Montrose could not keep quiet. The very opposite to Argyll on every side of his character, while the latter bided the time that he foresaw must come with eyes and ears ever open and tongue ever still, Montrose roamed restlessly about the country between the army at Newcastle and his own home, talking wildly to whomsoever would listen. The purpose of the burned Bond, Argyll's dictatorship, his meditated attack on the royal authority,—he poured all these dangerous secrets out to his comrade of the hour, careless who he might be. Once he talked in this strain in the presence of no less a person than old Leslie himself, as they were riding from Chester to Newcastle with a Colonel Cochrane. The prudent Colonel did not care for such talk in such company, and begged his rash lordship to change the subject. There might have been more dangerous listeners than Leslie, who was an honest man not given to making mischief, and, so long as his pay was safe and he did his duty by his soldiers, caring as little for one faction as the other. But it had been all one with Montrose who was by to hear him. Everything was going wrong. He could no longer trust the Covenant; he could not yet trust the King. His associates in the Bond, with one or two exceptions, had made their peace with the enemy. The Bond itself had been promptly burned, and the wildest stories circulated of its language and purpose.[1] Even among the more moderate Covenanters there were many who believed these stories, and looked

[1] A copy of it was discovered by Mark Napier among the manuscripts of Sir James Balfour (Lyon King-at-Arms) in the Advocates' Library; see *Memoirs of Montrose*, i. 269.

askance at Montrose as an ambitious, unscrupulous, designing man, careless of his country and intent only on his own ends. Conscious of the popular suspicions, chafing against a false position from which he saw no present means of escape, uneasy, discontented, doubtful where to turn and whom to trust—there could be but one issue to the struggle between such a man in such a mood and Argyll. Nor could the issue be far distant. Argyll had but to sit still and wait. He could not play his game better than his rival was playing it for him.

In the spring of 1641, while the Scottish army still lay at Newcastle and their commissioners still wrangled in London over the price of their return, a family party of four used to meet almost daily in Edinburgh at Montrose's lodgings in the Canongate, or at Napier's old house of Merchiston on the Borough Moor. Besides the two brothers-in-law there were their nephew Sir George Stirling of Keir, and Sir Archibald Stewart of Blackhall who had married Keir's sister. Of course the talk ran on the old lines. How was this unhappy country to be saved, and who could save it? It was agreed that the only possible saviour was the King. He must come to Edinburgh when the Parliament met in the summer, and satisfy his Scottish subjects that he meant fairly by them, as these four had satisfied themselves he could and would. To establish their religion and liberties would be to establish his own authority; the people would rally to the Throne when they recognised that only under the shadow of the Throne could they hope to enjoy the blessings of a settled government, just laws, and a free religion. "For they assured themselves" (so runs Mon-

trose's vindication) "that the King giving God His due, and the people theirs, they would give Cæsar that which was his." It was necessary to communicate with Charles, and most necessary to find a trusty messenger. They fixed upon a certain Walter Stewart of Traquair, who was on the eve of journeying to London on his own business, and whom, from his name, they conceived likely to get easy access to the Court. It was decided to approach the King through his cousin the Duke of Lennox, who was in high favour with his majesty, and had been employed in a similar capacity by the supplicants of 1637 to plead their grievances against Laud's prayer-book. There exists a paper in Napier's handwriting,—but evidently, from its similarity to the discourse on sovereign power mentioned in the last chapter, in great part, if not wholly, Montrose's composition,—which is believed to be the substance of the letter sent to Charles, and the tenor of his answer to Montrose strengthens the belief. All things, the King is told, depend on his personal presence in Scotland, the success of his affairs, the security of his authority, the peace and happiness of his subjects. It is useless to send a commissioner, no matter whom; he must come in person. The people bear him no ill-will, nor the Throne, nor will they suffer any attack to be made on it; their religion, as chosen by themselves, and their liberties as settled by the law of the land, are all they want. Let what they ask, if it be for their good, be granted, for that which tends to their good will assuredly include his own. But though the people should be justly treated and reasonably indulged, they should not be suffered to dispute his power. The sovereign power, he is warned, in words

almost identical with those addressed to Montrose's Noble Sir, "is an instrument never subject yet handled well." A king's authority should be maintained to the height allowed by the law of God and Nature, and the fundamental laws of the country. If not it sinks into contempt; and "weak and miserable is that people whose prince hath not power sufficient to punish oppression, and to maintain peace and justice." On the other hand, he is warned not to aim at absoluteness, which of all people the Scots will least endure. "Practice, sir, the temperate government. It fitteth the humour and disposition of the nation best. It is most strong, most powerful, and most durable of any. It gladdeth the hearts of your subjects, and then they erect a throne for you to reign." He is bid to beware of Rehoboam's counsellors: "they are flatterers, and therefore cannot be friends; they follow your fortune and love not your person." Finally, he is urged to settle the high offices of State upon men chosen by himself according to his own knowledge of their ability and honesty. Men who owe their preferment to the recommendation of others will not serve him well if it must be to the prejudice of their patrons. Whether this wise and liberal letter was the only letter entrusted to Stewart by the Plotters, as they soon came to be called, is not clearly known, but of that hereafter. For the present, having seen his messenger safely off on his journey south, Montrose himself left Edinburgh on a visit to Lord Stormont at Scone Abbey.

It was an unfortunate visit. The company gathered to welcome Montrose was the worst he could have met in his present temper. Stormont had himself been a

subscriber to the Bond, and was one of the few who had not made his peace with the enemy. There too was Athole, still smarting under the indignities suffered at Argyll's hands, and with Athole was his faithful henchman, John Stewart of Ladywell, Commissary of Dunkeld. It is easy to guess what were the subjects of conversation among such spirits. Unfortunately Montrose was not content with unburdening his sore mind to his friends. Some Covenanting ministers in the neighbourhood came ostensibly to pay their respects to him, and doubtless also to learn what such an ominous conjunction of malcontents might mean, and Montrose must needs also talk to them. He knew them all personally. There was John Graham of Auchterarder hard by his own castle of Kincardine; John Robertson of Perth; and Robert Murray of Methven. To the latter he was particularly anxious to explain himself, as one of the chief instruments of his subscription to the Covenant whose interests he was now accused of having sold. All the secret history of the Bond was accordingly poured into Murray's curious ears, of the treason it was designed to thwart, of the Dictatorship and the Triumvirate, of his intention to clear himself by challenging Argyll to his face before Parliament. It was known that Murray had been talking to Montrose, and his colleagues were not long in extracting from him all he had to tell. This was reported, doubtless with some embellishments, at the next meeting of the Presbytery at Auchterarder, and of course at once carried down to Argyll. Graham, when summoned to answer for his words, quoted Murray: Murray quoted Montrose; and so at last the long-gathering storm burst.

Never in any crisis of his life was Montrose slow to accept the consequences of his own acts. He frankly owned that Argyll, whom Murray had not dared to name before the Committee, was the man he aimed at; that he had done so partly on his own knowledge, partly on the authority of others who would bear him out; and he concluded by a direct appeal to Argyll to say what he knew of the business. Argyll swore that he had never heard of it before, and that the man who said he had ever uttered treason against the King was a base liar. Montrose then named his witnesses. Lord Lindsay of the Byres, he said, had spoken to him of the Dictatorship. The man who had reported the talk against the King was John Stewart of Ladywell. For the Triumvirate, he referred the Committee to Argyll's proposed colleagues, Cassillis and Mar, and to others, also named, who were present when the plan was framed.

Ladywell was instantly summoned, and corroborated all that his word had been pledged for. Argyll broke into a storm of passionate denial, but the witness stood firm. "My lord," he said, "I heard you speak these words in Athole in presence of a great many people, whereof you are in good memory." Lindsay was next examined. He admitted the conversation, but persisted that he had not named Argyll. Montrose could say no more than that if his memory had played him false on this point, at least the tenor of Lindsay's words had left him in no doubt at whom they were aimed. This relieved the Committee from an embarrassing position. Lindsay's admissions, coming on the back of Ladywell's sworn evidence, had grievously disturbed them. If

Montrose was right, two of their stoutest champions had been dabbling in what their own articles condemned as treason. But as Montrose had admitted the possibility of being mistaken in one instance it was open to assume that he had been mistaken in all. They accordingly reported to that effect. Lindsay's words, they found, did not bear Montrose's interpretation.

There still remained Ladywell to deal with. A man cursed with such an inconvenient memory could not safely be suffered to go at large, and the unfortunate creature had already been for days under close ward in the Castle. All good Covenanters were now rejoiced, and probably not much surprised, to hear that he had confessed to have done Argyll wrong. The treasonable speeches made in Athole were, he now said, his own fabrication, and further that he had been persuaded to send copies of them to the King by Montrose's messenger, Walter Stewart. A watch was accordingly set for Stewart; he was arrested on his way home at Cockburnspath, between Berwick and Dunbar, and sent to keep his namesake company in the Castle.

A man who denies his oath under pressure of fear is not easily believed, except by those who expect to profit by his denial. But it is probable that Ladywell's second story was the true one. For, after all, his confession amounted to no more than this, that Argyll's conversation had been rather historical than personal; he had spoken generally of the relation of subjects to their kings, not directly of Charles and Scotland. This is certainly more consistent with Argyll's character, who was not wont to let his tongue go too freely in any company, and would hardly have selected an audience

of loyal Ogilvies and Atholemen for such confidences. Argyll indeed still swore that he had not broached the subject at all, and brought a crowd of Campbells to bear him out. But Ladywell's amended version was corroborated by the only one of his witnesses who was summoned. It seems on the whole impossible to doubt that Argyll had been making some experiments on the national temper in the direction of what even his own party was as yet obliged to call treason. These things were in the air. Clarendon's report of his conversation with Henry Martin at Westminster shows what was in many minds at this time, and Argyll's own speeches in Parliament during the previous year had gone some little way on the same road. Ladywell's partial recantation did not save him. Perhaps it was too partial; perhaps his exoneration of Montrose from any share in his deception disappointed his judges; perhaps they resolved not to run the risk of a third version. At all events, when he had signed his confession, he was sent back to prison, tried under that old statute of leasing-making which had raised such an outcry when revised four years ago by Charles against Balmerino, found guilty, and executed. To Guthrie, who attended him on the scaffold, the poor creature asserted at the last that he had been induced to bear false witness against himself by promises of pardon and reward. But when a man once begins to go back on his own words, even his most probable version must be received cautiously.

The other prisoner, Walter Stewart, proved a more valuable prize. To clear Argyll was after all no great matter, for Argyll was strong enough to clear himself. The important point was to convict Montrose. A letter

to him from the King was discovered in the lining of Stewart's saddle. There was nothing in its language capable of being turned to his discredit, but it could be construed as an answer to some previous communication, and it certainly established the fact of a secret correspondence between the two which was contrary to the articles of the Covenant. And this was not all. Papers of a more suspicious nature were discovered—papers in Stewart's own hand, written in a strange jargon, where letters, phrases, and sometimes the names of animals were substituted for the names of persons. Stewart explained these as the heads of certain instructions entrusted to him by the Plotters to be delivered to the King through the hands of Lennox and Traquair. The *Elephant* or *Serpent* stood for Hamilton, the *Dromedary* for Argyll, Montrose himself was the *Genero*, the letters *A B C* signified the four conspirators—and so forth. The papers also contained some suggestions as to the preferment of Montrose and himself, and a warning that if they were neglected it would go ill with the King.

Stewart, like his namesake, did not keep to one story. He altered much, added something, contradicted himself many times. Traquair, who was then in London, flatly denied all knowledge of the papers, nor would he believe that Montrose or any man of sense, if minded to play such a dangerous game, would have taken into his confidence a timorous half-witted fool like Stewart. The King wrote in his own hand to Argyll one of his ambiguous letters, committing himself to nothing beyond a declaration that his journey to Scotland had not been prompted by Montrose or Traquair to their own ends, but was intended solely to settle all disputes on the

terms of the new treaty, and that he had given no promises of office to any man. He avowed his letter to Montrose as one fit to be written by a king to a good subject. Finally, he requested Argyll to do him right in this matter, and not permit him to be unjustly suspected. The day before this letter reached Edinburgh the four Plotters were arrested and sent as prisoners to the Castle.

Stewart's story, or stories, unquestionably rested on some foundation of truth, but on how much no man can tell. The accused, with the exception of Montrose, confessed to have talked with Stewart, but denied all knowledge of his hieroglyphics. Keir, indeed, owned to have been shown a paper by him containing some general propositions on public affairs which he understood to have been submitted to Charles by Lennox, and the King's answers. He gave a copy of it to Napier, but nothing seems to have been said either then or afterwards as to the author. Beyond this we cannot go. From this point of view Argyll and his faction were of course justified in regarding Montrose and his friends as conspirators. They were conspiring against Argyll, whom they believed to be the worst enemy of their country no less than of the King. Under his rule the Covenant had sunk to a mere faction, in which no honest patriot could any longer bear part or lot. They had persuaded themselves that salvation could come only by the King. He had promised all that a reasonable people could expect from him, and if he would hesitate no more nor go back again upon his word all would be well. While Argyll was carrying all before him, they could only work for their country's good in secret. So far they were

undoubtedly conspirators. Napier would have been soon set free at an early stage of the proceedings. He was an old man, much respected and liked by all parties. But he would not accept a favour which would imply, he said, a tacit confession of his guilt. Whatever their crime might be, they all shared it equally. Montrose refused, always courteously but persistently refused, to answer any questions before the Committee. If he was guilty, he said, let him be brought to a public trial. He was declared contumacious, and an order issued to make search for further evidence of treason against him. His servants were examined, his houses ransacked, his cabinets broken open, and his private papers read; but only one document was found that could by any ingenuity be turned against him. This was a defence of the Cumbernauld Bond, written, he assured the Committee, for his own private satisfaction only, now that the Bond had been burned and the whole affair, as he had supposed, laid for ever to rest. The Covenanting historians have described it as an "infamous and scurvey libel, full of vain humanities, magnifying to the skies his own courses, and debasing to hell his opposites." But as they have omitted to allow posterity the means of determining the justice of their description, and as Montrose's public writings and speeches certainly do not justify it, we may conclude that party feeling had something to do with these tremendous epithets. The Covenanters had in truth a profound belief in the wisdom of the advice embodied at a later day in the well-known formula, *Give your judgment, but never give your reasons.* They burned the Bond, they burned its justification, and then they thundered against both in safety. And they took

the same prudent course in another matter. In one of Montrose's cabinets were found some letters written in earlier and happier years by ladies with whom the young gallant had danced and exchanged compliments in the flowery fashion of the time. Their contents were never made public, but evil things were freely circulated of them to the edification of the sterner sort of Puritans; though others held that Lord Sinclair, who had been entrusted with the search, had played no honourable part in chattering of such private matters.

Such was the position of affairs when the King arrived in Edinburgh on the evening of August 14th, 1641. As usual he was received with every semblance of respect. The nobles thronged to Holyrood to kiss his hand; Argyll made flattering speeches to him in Parliament; he was entertained at a splendid banquet, where his health was drunk in right loyal fashion. He attended the Presbyterian service zealously, and talked much with Henderson. He drove with Leslie, who had now brought his army back from England, through the city amid the cheers of a delighted crowd. But this halcyon weather could not last long. The time came to fill those vacant offices of State which Montrose was accused of claiming for himself and his friends; then Argyll put forth his hand, and the mortified King soon found that it was the hand which now practically wielded the sceptre of Scotland. An Act was passed, making the King's choice of his ministers dependent on the will of Parliament. It was next moved that Parliament should have the right of submitting their own nominees to the King, and that no one who had sided with him during the late troubles should be eligible. These arbitrary

measures provoked indeed much discontent among the nobles, who had not stood up against the King to crouch under Argyll. "If this be what you call liberty," cried Perth, "God give me the old slavery again." But under their new Lords of the Articles the nobles, even if united, could no longer command a majority in Parliament; each Estate now chose its own lords, and out of the three two almost to a man followed Argyll. Outside the House, however, they had still to be reckoned with, and there the clamour against the popular leader was rising high. For the moment it was aimed even more against Hamilton, who, with his brother Lanark, was now openly courting Argyll, as against a renegade who had deserted both his faith and his friend. Ker, Lord Roxburgh's son, a headstrong young man who had once quarrelled and fought under the flag of the Covenant, publicly challenged Hamilton as a traitor. He was forced to apologise before the House, but he came up the High Street to make his submission escorted by six hundred armed retainers, and there were many who took a less tumultuous way of showing their sympathy with his action. Even Charles now found it a hard matter to keep his belief in the favourite unshaken.

At this juncture the King received a letter on which, after much reflection, he determined to take counsel. Twice already had Montrose written from his prison praying for an interview on matters of the deepest moment. The King would not see him nor answer his letters; a man in Montrose's position, he said, would promise much to secure an audience. Montrose now wrote a third time, no longer vaguely hinting of danger, but directly offering to prove some one, whom he did not

name, but who was clearly Hamilton, a traitor. It was impossible to disregard warnings that now began to match so well with his own suspicions. Charles determined to lay the letter before the Chancellor, London, and others, including Argyll himself, and to ask their advice.

Suddenly all Edinburgh broke into uproar. The news spread like wildfire that a plot had been discovered to murder Argyll, Hamilton, and Lanark, and that they had fled the city in fear of their lives. It was true that they had gone. Late on the evening of October 11th, the evening of the day on which the King had received Montrose's last letter, the three men had been warned of their danger by Leslie, and on the next day they left the city. But what was the danger, and from what quarter did it come? Leslie, when questioned, answered carelessly that the whole affair was a foolish business not worth talking of. On the afternoon of the 12th the King went down to Parliament to declare all he knew of the mystery. All he knew, if he told them all, was little enough. It really amounted to no more than that Hamilton had talked strangely to him of plots and calumnies, that he was very fond of Hamilton, and that it hurt him grievously to find himself distrusted by his friend. Finally he urged that his own credit, no less than Hamilton's, demanded an instant and public inquiry before the whole House. But Parliament insisted on the examination being conducted by a select committee; and after an unseemly wrangle lasting over several days, the King had to give way. The truth is that the Parliament had already begun to make inquiries, and what they had learned suggested the possibility of some

awkward disclosures. The Earl of Crawford, a fiery old Papist who had learned fighting in the German wars and had carried Ker's challenge to Hamilton, had already been arrested, with some lesser men. It was known that Montrose had been in communication with the King, and they not unreasonably suspected both of being at least privy to the plot, if not of favouring it. It is impossible even to guess how much the King knew, but there can be little doubt that Montrose was in the secret. The story, first circulated by Clarendon, that he had offered at a private interview with the King to kill both Hamilton and Argyll, as the surest and speediest means of bringing a couple of traitors to their deserts, is now generally and justly discredited. But Clarendon, it should be remembered, gave two versions of this perplexing affair. The King, he writes, was warned by certain persons in the confidence of Montrose that Argyll and Hamilton were playing him false, and his leave was asked to bring them to justice. The majority of the nobles, he was told, were on his side, and ready, if he consented, to take the two traitors out of the reach of their retainers and lodge them securely in prison to await fair trial. While the King, doubtful of the chance of bringing their guilt home to such high offenders, was pondering these things, the two men (Lanark's name is not mentioned in Clarendon's story) suddenly and secretly left the capital on the plea that their enemies were plotting to murder them. Then followed a confused period of debates in Parliament, appointment of committees, examination of witnesses, charges and counter-charges, after which the fugitives returned to Edinburgh, acknowledging to the King that the danger,

though assuredly no mere fancy, was perhaps less pressing than they had been led to believe; and so the trouble passed gradually away. Such in substance is Clarendon's original version of what is known in Scottish history as the Incident, and two centuries of research have enabled us to add little to it. But such is not the version that first appeared in Clarendon's pages. Twenty years after he had finished the greater part of the History of the Rebellion, he began, in banishment at Montpellier, to write the history of his own life. Many passages were subsequently transferred from the more private narrative to the pages of the History, and among them one in which Montrose's share in the Incident takes a new and startling complexion. He is now directly charged with offering to play the assassin. No authority is vouchsafed for the new story. For the old one Charles, and indirectly Montrose himself, stand sponsors. Clarendon did not live to finally revise the transcript of his History, and we can only therefore conjecture his reasons for changing an intelligible, if meagre, narrative of events, matching well with all that has been subsequently learned concerning them, for a grave personal charge which there is no tittle of evidence to prove. Such as it was, however, the History was published with all its imperfections on its head, nor did the world learn till more than a century later that there was another version of this strange story, clearing the memory of a brave and honourable man from an odious imputation.[1]

[1] The first edition of Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion* was published at Oxford, 1702-4, under the direction of his sons, with many alterations and suppressions. This edition was reprinted

In this earlier version we probably have the true story of the Incident in outline. But all attempts to fill the outline in lead only to confusion. It is certain that there was a strong party among the nobles violently incensed against Hamilton and Argyll. Some, like Montrose, were no doubt convinced that these two men were playing both their king and country false; others were merely jealous of an influence won and exercised at their expense. The former were bent only on a fair trial; but to talk of a fair trial was idle while the culprits went at large with five thousand armed men at their back; the sole chance of proving their guilt was to render them incapable of resistance during its proof. Such was probably the original plan of the Incident, and if not devised by Montrose would assuredly have found no opposition from him; and such, it is not unreasonable to suppose, would have been his proposal to the King had his petition for a private interview been granted. Strange diseases, to borrow Argyll's own words, need strange remedies; and to enforce justice by violence, if it could be secured in no other way, would have shocked few Scotsmen of that day. Such at least, if the witnesses spoke truth, was the plan as it had shaped itself in Almond's mind, who intended and

several times. In 1826 many suppressed passages were restored, and the text collated with the original manuscript in the Bodleian Library. It was then that the earlier version of the Incident was made public, though Hume had already discredited the popular one on the somewhat insufficient grounds that Montrose, being a prisoner, could not have been admitted to an interview with the King. More careful collations were made for the editions of 1849 and 1888, when several fresh passages that had been previously overlooked were added.

would tolerate no more than was needed to ensure the straight course of the law. But the secret was shared by more unscrupulous spirits than Montrose or Almond. Carnwath had been heard to say with many curses that there were now three kings in Scotland, and that two of them must lose their heads. Crawford, who was to have been entrusted with the seizure, was reported to have declared that the best way to bring traitors to justice was to cut their throats. It was probably through such wild speeches that the plot miscarried. Many a man, and Montrose among them, had doubtless been well pleased to see Argyll or Hamilton at his sword's point on a fair field, who would lend no countenance to stabber's work. But it is not safe to put much reliance on the evidence of the witnesses. All of them contradicted each other, and many contradicted themselves. Conspicuous among them was William Murray, a member of the royal household and high in his master's confidence, who, unless foully wronged by history, was the most unconscionable rogue of all that treacherous time. He seems indeed to have been no better than a spy in the pay both of the Scottish Covenant and the English Parliament, and he was certainly intriguing at the same time with both Hamilton and Montrose. But in truth a suspicion of insincerity hangs over the whole inquiry. The Parliament were manifestly unwilling to press matters too closely. They would have been well pleased to prove the plot, could they have selected the plotters, and they did not want to hear too much about its intended victims.

On one point, however, they were firm. They determined to know the truth of the correspondence between

Montrose and the King. Charles showed them the last letter, the letter on which he had decided to ask their advice before the storm of the Incident burst. Nothing was to be learned from it. It was couched in general terms, promising, if admitted to an interview, "to acquaint his Majesty with a business which not only did concern his honour in a high degree, but the standing and falling of his crown likewise." Montrose was twice examined on the meaning of these ambiguous words, once in the presence of the King at Holyrood by a special committee, and again before the general committee of inquiry. Both examinations were fruitless. Of the first there is no record; but from the meagre report preserved of the second Montrose seems to have adhered at both to the literal text of his letter, and to have declined to commit himself to any more definite statement. He did not intend, he is reported to have said, "neither could he, nor would he, wrong any particular person whatsoever." This answer, it is naïvely added, did not give the House satisfaction.

It was all the satisfaction they were to get. Wearied with an examination that would plainly not discover what they wished to find, and might discover what they wished to conceal, with fresh and more serious matters for thought in the startling news of the Irish rising, Parliament suffered the Incident to die a natural death. The fugitives were welcomed back to the capital with the assurance that they were honest men, loyal subjects, and good patriots. Argyll on his return carried all before him. The offices of State were filled with his nominees. The Privy Council was carefully weeded to make room for his friends. The unfortunate King, to

fill the cup of his humiliation full, scattered titles with a lavish hand. Argyll was raised to a marquisate; Almond was created Earl of Callendar; bluff old Leslie took his seat among the peers of Scotland as Earl of Leven. To complete the burlesque, Crawford was released from custody without more ado, at the particular request of the magnanimous heroes whose throats he was to have cut. Even Montrose and his friends were suffered to share in the general amnesty, though after a colder fashion. On November 16th, after an imprisonment of five months without a trial, and without any specific allegation of offence, they were discharged with a caution "to carry themselves soberly and discreetly" for the future, and to appear for trial when required. Charles bound himself never to employ their services again without the consent of Parliament, or suffer them to approach his presence; and on the 18th of November he left Scotland for the last time, a contented prince, as he professed to believe, taking leave of a contented people.

It was not till the following March that the case against the Plotters was finally closed. The mockery of their trial was continued at intervals throughout the winter, but no fresh evidence was found against them, no report of their examination was ever published, nor indeed was any formal judgment ever delivered. It had been decided that sentence should be left to the King. The committee, in short, was playing the same game that had already proved so successful in the affairs of the Bond and the Incident. By keeping the inquiry secret the real weakness of their case was concealed, and by refraining from a punishment that

they could not inflict they acquired an easy reputation for mercy, while leaving the accused open to every charge that the imagination of fear or faction could devise. It was even intimated that the prisoners owed their escape to Argyll's clemency. Argyll's clemency consisted in refusing to press matters to an extremity which he foresaw might prove more inconvenient to his friends than to his enemies. But in truth he could have afforded to be merciful. For the second time Montrose had challenged him on his own ground, and for the second time victory, even more signally than before, had declared for him.

CHAPTER VII

THE KING'S COMMISSION

This final rupture with the Covenant did not at once throw Montrose into the arms of the King. The malignant star of Hamilton was still in the ascendant. In spite of all that had passed Charles still believed that in the Scots he would find a counterpoise to the rebellious English, and Hamilton, for purposes known only to himself, encouraged him in the belief. Montrose knew better. He knew, from his own past experience, how good was the secret understanding between the two Parliaments. He knew that the army, now again mustering under the new Earl of Leven, was never destined to waste its strength on Irish rebels. He knew that the Covenant was only biding its time to join hands with the English Parliament; and he saw clearly that the only chance of preventing this fatal union was to strike such a blow at the former before it was ready for action as would leave it no leisure to meddle with matters outside its own borders. He would have warned the King of this before the war began, but Charles, mindful of his promise to the Estates, and careful always to keep promises it was not in his interests to break, refused to see him. He warned

Henrietta Maria of it at Bridlington Quay amid the thunder of English guns firing on an English Queen, and he renewed his warnings again when Newcastle had escorted her to York, and the harassed lady could breathe and listen in safety. But Hamilton was also at her side persuading her, as he had persuaded the King, that no danger was to be feared from Scotland so long as no violence was attempted, and that he might be relied upon to keep the country quiet and loyal to its engagements. It was known that after Edgehill, when Charles was marching on London, the Houses at Westminster had directly invited the Scots into England to keep Newcastle's northern army in check, while the King's own appeals to his "contented people" had been invariably rejected. Yet the general feeling seems to have been in favour of a temporising policy. The truth was that, though many Royalists looked coldly on Hamilton, few were as yet inclined to trust Montrose. Among the old thorough-going cavaliers the taint of the Covenant still hung about him; his repentance, they thought, savoured too much of personal pique to be altogether genuine. But with the majority it was not so much his good faith as his capacity that was distrusted. They considered him a brilliant adventurer, brave and daring, but too young and inexperienced for these high matters, too rash and headstrong. "Montrose," they said, "is a generous spirit, but Hamilton hath the better head-piece." The King showed his opinion of the two men in characteristic fashion; he wrote courteously to Montrose, and advanced Hamilton to a dukedom.

So, during the first year of the war, Montrose was

forced to eat his heart out in idleness, at home among his books, in strenuous efforts to keep alive the fainting loyalty of his party, or in despairing consultations with his friends on the approach of the inevitable hour that they were powerless to prevent. The Covenanters, aware of his situation, and conceiving that his proud and restless spirit, chafing under the sickness of hopes deferred and services rejected, would render him amenable to their designs, sought to win him again to their side. They offered him the command of their new army under Leven; they even offered, as they had once offered Huntly, to pay his debts. The Moderator Henderson (at Argyll's suggestion, it would seem, and certainly with his knowledge) was sent to solve some doubts he affected to entertain on the propriety of accepting these offers, and from him Montrose learned all that he expected and feared to know.

This curious interview took place on the banks of the Forth near the Bridge of Stirling. Henderson was accompanied by Sir James Rollo, who filled the embarrassing situation of brother-in-law to both Montrose and Argyll.[1] Montrose, who knew from the Queen that these Covenanting overtures had been reported to his disadvantage in England, had taken care to be accompanied by good guarantees for his integrity. He came with Napier and Napier's son the young Master, with Keir and Lord Ogilvy. For two hours the interview lasted by the water-side. Montrose, professing to have lived lately too much in retirement to be aware how matters were going in the great public world, asked

[1] His first wife was the Lady Dorothea Graham; on her death in 1638 he had married Lady Mary Campbell.

the Moderator what these offers meant, and what he was expected to do for them. Henderson, in the belief that he was talking to an apostate only anxious to find a plausible excuse for his apostasy, frankly admitted that it was intended to send an army into England to co-operate with the Parliamentary forces, and that in both countries it was resolved to push matters to the extreme against the King; and he urged Montrose to hesitate no longer, but to throw himself heartily into the good work, assuring him that he had only to state his terms, and that whatever they might be they would be accepted. Montrose then turned to his brother-in-law and asked if they came as the mouthpiece of the Estates, or only out of goodwill to him. Sir James answered that he understood the Moderator to have spoken by authority. But to this Henderson demurred. He was not exactly commissioned, he said, by the Estates, but he was sure that they would make all his promises good. "That will not do for me," replied Montrose. "I cannot commit myself in such important matters without the assurance of the public faith, especially when the messengers cannot agree among themselves as to the terms of their message."

The substance of this interview was at once reported by Montrose, first to the Queen at Oxford, and then to the King in his camp before Gloucester. Still they both hesitated, nor was it till Hamilton himself confessed his failure that their eyes were opened. A Convention of the Estates had been summoned to meet in Edinburgh at the very time of the conference on the banks of the Forth. It was soon made clear that Henderson had spoken no more than truth when he told Montrose that the King need hope for

nothing from Scotland. Though the Convention had been summoned without royal warrant, Hamilton attended as the Royal Commissioner, and was urgent with all loyal subjects to be in their places to secure him that diplomatic triumph which he had promised his confiding master. With Montrose he had been especially urgent, but Montrose had refused to attend unless the Commissioner would promise, should fair words prove useless, to sanction an appeal to force. Hamilton would not give the promise. "I will protest," he said, "but I will not fight." He did not even protest. Argyll asked him scornfully if he had nothing to say on the King's behalf. Lanark answered for him that he would not wrong himself and them by protesting against the wisdom of a whole kingdom. Hamilton muttered some confused words to the same purpose, and the loyal peers, who had obeyed his summons, left the hall in disgust.

All went forward as Henderson had predicted. Whatever reluctance might have been felt by the moderate Covenanters to declare open war against the King had been removed by the recent capture of Antrim in Ireland, with letters in his pocket from Nithsdale and Aboyne concerning a rising in Scotland to be backed by a force of Irish Catholics. There was no proof that this plan had been proposed to the King, still less that he had accepted it; but the mere whisper of the hated word *Papist* was enough to set Presbyterian Scotland in a blaze. The elections for the new Convention resulted in a large majority in favour of a military alliance with England. At the same time Waller's defeat at Roundway Down removed the last scruple entertained at Westminster on employing a

Scottish army against Englishmen. The Commissioners from London, among whom was the younger Vane, were authorised to demand a force of eleven thousand men. Terms were soon arranged, and Lanark, as Secretary of State, set the seal on his treachery by affixing the King's signature to a warrant authorising the levy of an army to be employed against the King's authority. Then, to draw the bond still closer between the English Puritans and Scottish Presbyterians, a new Covenant was formed by Vane and Henderson for mutual adoption under the title of the Solemn League and Covenant, which, after ratification by the Estates, was accepted by both Houses at Westminster, and solemnly subscribed in Saint Margaret's Church on September 25th, 1643.

The King could no longer blind himself to the truth. Hamilton had failed, and it was now clear that his failure had been inevitable from the first. He came with his brother to Oxford to justify himself before his indignant master. But Montrose was there also, with all the loyal Scottish peers, Crawford and Nithsdale, Ogilvy and Aboyne, who had been cajoled into attending the Convention, and in the face of their evidence no justification was possible. Whether he had been traitor or fool mattered little now; but even the long-suffering King was forced to own that, if an honest man, the favourite had at least shown his honesty after a strange and disastrous fashion. The brothers were arrested. Lanark made his escape to the Covenanters; but Hamilton was sent a prisoner under a strong guard to Pendennis Castle in Cornwall.

Then, at last, the King turned for help to Montrose.

Was the plan he had been urging for the last twelve months on unheeding ears still practicable? The Scots had crossed the Tweed; all the garrisons and passes of the Border were in their hands; any day might bring Leven and Newcastle face to face. Even Montrose could not but confess the venture to be a desperate one. But desperate ventures only raised that dauntless spirit. The plan that had seemed so easy a few short months since could not be impossible now, with all his friends round him, with his sovereign at his back, and no Hamilton in his path. If Newcastle could spare a few troopers he could make his way through the Lowlands to his own lands beyond the Tay. There, among his own people, with the royal commission in his hand, with Aboyne and Ogilvy for his lieutenants, he would rally the loyal North to the King's standard, and, sweeping down on the rear of the invading Scots, would soon send them back over their borders faster than they had come. Meanwhile Antrim, who was at large again, must effect a diversion from Ireland on the west, and beard the Dictator in his own country. The plan was thought sheer madness at Oxford, where little confidence was felt in Montrose, and none at all in Antrim, a vain and foolish man, notorious for nothing, in Clarendon's contemptuous phrase, but for his marriage with the great Duke of Buckingham's widow. But Digby, who dearly loved a hazard and could persuade the King to anything, favoured the scheme. Antrim was despatched to Ireland, and Montrose made ready for his more perilous journey to the Border. He knew his jealous countrymen too well to come before them in the character Charles wished him to assume, of Viceroy and Captain-

General of the Royal Forces in Scotland. On his own advice these sounding titles were conferred on the King's nephew, Prince Maurice, as whose Lieutenant-General Montrose left Oxford for the North early in March, 1644. Crawford, Nithsdale, Reay, Ogilvy, and Aboyne rode with him, and a miscellaneous following of gentlemen-adventurers and their servants, some hundred in all.

Their first point was Newcastle's camp at Durham, where Montrose hoped to make some additions to his scanty army. He was received with all the circumstance and courtesy befitting his new honours, but with small assurance of help. Indeed Newcastle seemed in no good condition to help himself. Montrose was a spectator of the inglorious affair at Kowdenhill, which, but for the bravery of Sir Charles Lucas who led the English cavalry, might have ended in disaster. Here he saw that valiant Amazon, Mrs. Peirsons, riding, armed to the teeth, at the head of a troop of horse conspicuous for a black flag showing the ghastly device of a naked man hanging from a gibbet, with the motto *I dare*, the legendary banner of the House of Dalzell. The troop had been raised and armed at the charges of Carnwath, the head of that House; but the commission ran in the name of Captain Frances Dalzell, under which style the woman whom he called his daughter took the field. Carnwath's loyalty was of the sort too common at that time, and common especially among Scotsmen. The incompetence of an English general, though it might grieve him for his master's sake, could not, for the present at least, affect Montrose's plans. The jealousy of a Scottish peer might affect them seriously. It was this he feared more than all the swords of the Covenant

or the subtleties of Argyll. For his enemies he could account. But who would undertake to account for those who should be his friends? The King had issued a commission for Carnwath as Lieutenant of Clydesdale where his lands lay, which was delivered to him by Aboyne as aide-de-camp to the Lord Lieutenant-General of the Northern Expedition. The petulant old nobleman, who had been secretly chafing at Montrose's authority and the respect paid to it in the English camp, conceived himself entitled to some better reward for the expense of equipping Captain Frances Dalzell and her men for the field than an appointment which placed him at the orders of a man young enough to be his son, and who at the best was but a renegade Covenanter. Refusing even to read his commission, he flung it from him with one of those full-mouthed Scottish oaths that were always at his command.

But it was no time to stand upon punctilios. All the aid Newcastle could give was a hundred badly-mounted troopers and two small brass field-pieces. With these, and his own personal following, Montrose struck westward for Carlisle. On the road he was joined by eight hundred foot of the Northumberland and Cumberland Militia and three troops of horse. Such was the army with which this dauntless leader of a forlorn hope went forth to conquer Scotland for King Charles.

The beginning was disastrous. He crossed the Border on April 13th, and on the first day's march up the Annan the English troops quarrelled with their Scotch allies and deserted in a body. Still he pressed on with his own men and occupied Dumfries. There, at the head of his little band, he read his commission to the few

townsmen who had not cared to run away, and raised the royal standard. There too he published the first of those declarations with which he was henceforth careful to mark his actions as the deliberate result of convictions forced on him by the conduct of his former allies. Not he, but they had changed the point of view. He was King's man now, as he had been Covenanter, "for the defence and maintenance of the true Protestant religion, his Majesty's just and sacred authority, the fundamental laws and privileges of Parliaments, the peace and freedom of oppressed and thralled subjects." For this he had taken the oath of the Covenant; for this he had borne arms in its service; for this he was now in arms for the King against traitors who had broken their faith to their country and to him. "I do again," he concludes, "most solemnly declare that, knew I not perfectly his Majesty's intention to be such, and so real as is already expressed, I should never at all have embarked myself in this service. Nor did I but see the least appearance of his Majesty's change from these resolutions or any of them, I should never continue longer my faithful endeavour in it."[1] These brave words fell on dull or unbelieving ears. Without allies it was madness to advance; to linger idle in Dumfries was useless, even if he could hope to hold the town. For two days he waited for Antrim and his Irishmen and the loyal gentlemen of the Western Lowlands. He waited in vain. Not a Scotsman joined him; nothing could be heard of Antrim; from every side came news of mustering foes. A solitary welcome was sent to him from the faithful

[1] Napier's *Memorials of Montrose* (printed for the Maitland Club), ii. 146.

hearts at Keir, urging him to make at once for Stirling, where Lord Sinclair, who held the bulwark of the North for the Covenant, was reported to be only waiting his chance to declare for the King. But he could not trust Sinclair; and learning that a strong force under the fickle Callendar was marching against him, he had no alternative but to fall back on Carlisle.

Yet, though foiled for the time, Montrose could not be idle. He contrived to draw a few troops together from the garrison at Newcastle and elsewhere, and with these he patrolled the Border, keeping Callendar in check on the Western Marches and gathering up forage and provisions everywhere for the English army. After some brisk fighting, and in the teeth of Leslie's cavalry, he took Morpeth Castle, a strong and important post, and a smaller fort at the mouth of the Tyne. From this most useful and not inglorious work he was summoned by an urgent message from Rupert, who was then marching to the relief of York, to join him at once with all the men he could muster. With all his haste he could not reach the prince till the evening after the fatal Second of July; and when the two men met in the little inn at Richmond the King had no longer an army in the north of England.

Still Montrose did not despair. If Rupert would give him a thousand horse he would cut his way into the heart of Scotland. But Rupert had neither horse, nor men, nor muskets to give. "When we came to the prince his occasions forced him to make use of the forces we brought along with us and would not suffer him to supply us with others; so that we were left altogether abandoned, and could not so much as find quartering

for our own person in these counties." In such words was Montrose compelled to declare his forlorn situation to the King whom he had left but four short months earlier with every assurance of victory. But he added to them a characteristic postscript: "Forget not to show how feasible the business is yet, and the reason thereof if right courses be taken." And yet the outlook was dark enough to make even that stout spirit sink. His own reverses were but a small thing, the fortune of war which the next turn of the wheel might repair. It was the selfishness, the jealousy, the treachery, that made his heart sore. All he feared had come true. The commissions he had carried with him had shared the fate of Carnwath's lieutenancy, and these proud King's men would brook no master in the King's Lieutenant-General. The superior rank that his new patent of Marquis gave him over them, instead of confirming his authority, only aggravated his offence.[1] And still there was no sign of the Irishmen. All the Lowlands from the Forth to the Solway were in the hands of the Covenanters. Traquair, once the most trusted of the King's Scottish counsellors after Hamilton, had now openly declared for them, and was busy promising in their name pardon and preferment to all Royalists who should follow him. Huntly had indeed called his men out in the north, but had been easily routed by Argyll, and some gallant Gordons had paid the penalty for their chief's miscarriage with their heads.

Such was the substance of the report entrusted to Ogilvy for the King's hand. It was drawn up at Carlisle, whither the baffled adventurers had retired

[1] The patent is dated at Oxford, May 6th, 1644.

after the disaster at Marston. Nothing more could be done now but to make the best of their way back to headquarters at Oxford and there wait with their sovereign for a happier time. In this decision Montrose had seemed to acquiesce while secretly resolved on a very different enterprise. Early in August the melancholy cavalcade left Carlisle for the South. After nightfall on the second day, Montrose, having confided his plans to Ogilvy alone, privately left his companions, who, seeing his aide-de-camp, his horses, servants, and baggage still with them, continued their march for Oxford, never doubting that their chief was following. But they were not destined to reach their journey's end in safety. On their way through Lancashire they were attacked by a strong body of rebel horse, and after a stout resistance carried prisoners into Leven's camp before Newcastle. Their leader returned to Carlisle.

No wilder project was ever hatched in mortal brain than that on which Montrose was now bent. It was clear even to him that the game for the present was up in the Lowlands; but the Highlands were still open. There, among his own people, he might at least wait in safety for Antrim's promised succours, which must surely now be on their road, and there he might hope to find the loyal hearts which had ceased to beat south of the Forth. But to reach the Highlands he must first cross the Border where every pass and road was jealously watched by Covenanting patrols, and make his way through a country where every town and castle flew the blue flag. He knew that his enemies would give more to have him in their hands than for the King

and all his armies, and he knew well that from those hands he need never hope to escape with life. In truth the design seems to match better with the brilliant romance of the great novelist than the sober record of history. He chose for his companions Sir William Rollo, a younger brother of the Laird of Duncruib, and Colonel Sibbald who had served under him in the Covenanting armies. They wore the dress of Leven's troopers, while the Marquis in the guise of a groom rode after them on a sorry nag and leading another by the bridle.

At the Border they were met by the startling intelligence that Montrose was known to be in the neighbourhood, and that the strictest watch was kept for him at all the passes. But a more serious danger soon threatened them. A Scots soldier, who had served under Newcastle and seen Montrose in the camp at Durham, at once detected him under his mean disguise and saluted him by name. The seeming groom would have maintained his character, but the soldier would take no denial. "What!" he said. "Do I not know my Lord Marquis of Montrose? But go your way and God be with you!" They gave him a few crowns, and the faithful fellow kept their secret well.

Thus, after four days of hard riding and continuous peril, Montrose reached the Highlands. He passed through his own lands without halting till he came to Tullibelton, on the Tay between Perth and Dunkeld, the seat of Patrick Graham of Inchbrakie the best loved and trusted of all his kinsmen. Here he could draw breath in safety, though the strictest concealment was still necessary till he could learn the state of the

country. He passed his nights in a little hut among the woods, and his days in lonely rambles on the hills, while his two companions went on to Keir to report the wanderer's arrival, and to learn how things went in those parts for the King.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CAMPAIGN IN THE HIGHLANDS

(TIPPERMUIR—ABERDEEN—INVERLOCHY)

THE report was not encouraging. Huntly's abortive rising had only served to strengthen the hands of the Covenant. North of the Grampians Sutherland and Seaforth were in arms with the Forbeses, Frasers, and Grants, all hereditary enemies of the Gordons. To the south another force was mustering under Elcho at Perth. The men of Athole, the Stuarts, and the Robertsons, were sound at the core, but had looked in vain for a leader since the death of Montrose's friend and Argyll's sworn foe, the loyal Earl of Athole, and in the want of a leader they too had fallen under the universal yoke. Between Highlands and Lowlands there seemed in truth but little choice.

While wandering one day in despondent mood on the hills Montrose saw a man hastening towards him over the heather with the fiery cross, the Highland signal for war, in his hand. He had been sent to warn Perth of a great army of Irishmen that had entered Athole under Alaster Macdonald [1] threatening to burn

[1] Alaster, or Alexander Macdonald, son of Coll Keitach Macdonald of Colonsay. Coll Keitach means he who can fight with

and ravage the whole country unless it joined them for King Charles. Within a short time arrived, by a series of lucky accidents, a letter from Macdonald himself announcing his arrival to Montrose, whom he supposed to be still at Carlisle. Montrose answered at once, bidding Macdonald to make straight for Blair Athole, and promising to join him there with all speed.

In the prospect of action all doubts and difficulties vanished at once from Montrose's sanguine mind. He saw only that the time had come at last to make good his pledge to the King, and though all the armies of the Covenant were gathering to their prey, made good it should be. In a Highland dress, on foot, with no companion but Inchbrakie, he set off over the hills for the rendezvous with the King's commission in his pocket and the King's standard on his shoulder. He arrived at a critical moment. The men of Athole did not care to see these Irishmen in their country. They looked on Macdonald, though partly of their own race, as an upstart unfit to lead Highland gentlemen to battle. For the Highland chieftains were as jealous as the Lowland peers. No chief would serve under another chief; no clan would follow any but its hereditary lord. A Cameron would take no orders from a Macleod; the Macphersons, who numbered some four hundred in all, held themselves as good men as the Campbells, who could bring five thousand claymores into the field. Nor was the appearance of the Irishmen

either hand. The Lowland corruption, Colkitto, has been improperly given to the son, whose correct designation would be Mac Coll Keitach. Macdonnell, the family name of the Earl of Antrim, is the same as Macdonald. The father of the first Earl of Antrim was Sorley Buy Macdonald, brother of Coll Keitach's grandfather.

such as to inspire much respect. There were only about twelve hundred of them, indifferently armed and attended by a rabble of half-starved, half-naked women and children. Montrose found the Highlanders on the point of coming to blows with their unwelcome allies. But his arrival at once changed the spirit of the scene. Macdonald could not at first believe that this travel-stained, meanly-dressed man was the King's Lieutenant-General, the famous Marquis of Montrose; but the shouts of the Highlanders soon assured him. They knew the Marquis well by sight, and his companion, whom they had affectionately dubbed Black Pate, was their particular friend. Scots and Irish united in welcoming their chief. The royal commission was read, and the royal standard unfurled on a small hill below the castle and close to the modern house of Lude.

And now at last there was a royal army in Scotland, and the King's Lieutenant was something more than an empty name. Yet it was not one with which any general but Montrose would have cared to take the field. At the most it cannot have exceeded two thousand three hundred men. The Irish carried rusty matchlocks, with ammunition enough for a round a piece. A few of the Highlanders were armed with the claymore, but bows and arrows, pikes and rude clubs, were the more common weapons. Cavalry there was none, but the three horses on which Montrose and his companions had ridden from Carlisle, mere scarecrows of skin and bone, as Wishart calls them *omnino strigosos et emaciatos*. Against this rude array there were no less than three armies in the field, one under Lord Balfour of Burleigh at Aberdeen, another under Elcho at Perth, while Argyll

was coming up fast from the West to avenge the flaming homesteads and slaughtered herds that had marked the course of the hated Macdonald through the country of the Campbells. Montrose chose the nearest, and striking south through the hills crossed the Tay on the last day of August. As they marched through Glen Almond they were joined by five hundred men under Lord Kilpont and the Master of Maderty, Montrose's brother-in-law. They had come out at Elcho's summons to defend their lands against the public enemy, not to fight against their kinsman.[1] With these welcome succours Montrose continued his march upon Perth. Early on the morning of Sunday, September 1st, he came in sight of the Covenanters drawn up in order of battle on the plain of Tippermuir between him and the city.

Elcho's army was composed of six thousand foot, seven hundred horse, and a small park of artillery. But the odds were not so great as they looked. Elcho's military reputation did not stand high, and his soldiers were mostly townsmen and peasants ignorant of war and, despite the exhortations of their preachers, with no great stomach for it. Montrose, on the other hand, could trust every man in his little force. They were not indeed trained soldiers, but they had all been bred from their youth to keep their heads with their hands, were utterly fearless, and conscious of two important facts—that there was a powerful enemy in their rear, and a rich prize before them. He formed them in a long line three deep, with orders to the Irish to reserve their single volley till they were close on the enemy,

[1] Lord Kilpont was the son of the Earl of Airth and Menteith, for whom see chapter ii.

while those who had no guns might use the stones of which there was a plentiful supply on the moor ready to their hands. But it was on the wild rush of the charge, and the stout arms of his men, that he relied. Could they once get home on the Perthshire cits, he had little fear of the result. His own place was on the right wing; Kilpont commanded on the left; Macdonald and his Irishmen were in the centre.

But first, that all things might be done in order, Montrose sent young Maderty, under a flag of truce, to inform Elcho that he was acting under the commission of their King, whose only desire was to persuade his subjects to return to their lawful allegiance and to avoid all bloodshed. Elcho's answer was to send the messenger a prisoner into Perth, with the assurance that he should pay for his insolence with his head so soon as the army of the Lord had done its work.

What followed can hardly be dignified with the name of a battle. The Irishmen fired their volley, the Highlanders hurled their pebbles, and both with a wild yell sprang straight at their foe. The Covenanters, horse and foot, broke and ran like sheep. Only on the right wing was there any resistance, where Sir James Scott, a brave man who had seen service in the Italian wars, held his ground for a time among some enclosures, till Montrose burst in at the head of the Atholemen. Not more than a dozen fell in the actual fight, which lasted but a few minutes; but many hundreds were cut down in the rout. The claymores and Lochaber axes did bloody work among the fugitives, and some of the fat burghers, untouched by either, are said to have dropped dead from sheer exhaustion. Before night fell Montrose was master

of Perth, without the loss of a single man, and with but two wounded.

No plundering was allowed. The arms, ammunition, and baggage of the enemy were lawful spoil, and on the dead bodies the victors might work their will; but within the walls strict order was commanded and kept. Some of the prisoners took service under King Charles; the rest were released on parole. A fine was imposed on the town, and for three days Montrose and his men lived at free quarters. It was during these days that he was joined by his two eldest sons and his old tutor William Forrett; the two younger boys, with their mother, were at Kinnaird Castle under the care of her father Southesk.

On September 4th Montrose left Perth for Aberdeen. In point of equipment his force was now vastly superior to that he had led to victory at Tippermuir. His men were all well armed and clothed; ammunition was plentiful, and there was some money in the chest. A few gentlemen joined him on the march. Among them was the gallant old Earl of Airlie, with his two younger sons Sir Thomas and Sir David Ogilvy, who through good and evil fortune remained faithful to the end; and Nathaniel Gordon, one of the bravest and the most constant of his name. These brought a welcome addition to his force in the shape of a small body of cavalry, not indeed exceeding fifty troopers, but all well mounted and well armed. On the other hand there had been some serious defections. As usual, most of the Highlanders had gone off to the mountains to secure their booty. Lord Kilpont's men had withdrawn with the body of their young chief, after his mysterious death at

the hands of his kinsman Stewart of Ardvoirlich, which had occurred in camp on the morning after they had left Perth.[1] When Montrose summoned Aberdeen on the morning of September 12th, he had at his back only fifteen hundred foot, fifty horse, and the few field-pieces taken at Tippermuir.

The Covenanters were two thousand strong in foot, with five hundred horse. Two of Huntly's sons were among them. It is idle to search for the causes which placed these scions of a loyal House in the ranks of their sovereign's enemies. One cause was undoubtedly jealousy of Montrose, whose treatment of their father they had not yet forgiven. Moreover, though Huntly's sons, they were also Argyll's nephews, and for the present the uncle had the upper hand of the father. There at all events they were, not only marshalled to fight against the King's troops, but marshalled side by side with their hereditary foes, the Crichtons, Frasers, and other families who welcomed the Covenant as a counterpoise to the overweening power of the Gordons. But though superior in numbers, and not inferior in arms and courage, the Covenanters were totally deficient in discipline, and their nominal leader, Lord Balfour of Burleigh, had neither knowledge nor authority to control them.

The bridge over the Dee had been fortified, and Montrose, remembering his former experiences at this place, led his army up the river to a ford some fifteen

[1] An explanation of this strange story has been given in the Introduction to *A Legend of Montrose*. The welcome accorded to Stewart by Argyll, and the terms in which his pardon was recorded by the Covenanters, certainly lend some colour to the original belief that Kilpont was slain for refusing to join in a plot to murder Montrose. See *Montrose and the Covenanters*, ii. 323-325.

miles above the city. Here they crossed, and encamped for the night in the grounds of Crathes Castle, whose owner, though no King's man, thought the King's Lieutenant, with fifteen hundred men at his back, entitled to every courtesy. Next morning Montrose led his men down the north bank of the river within two miles of Aberdeen, where he found the Covenanters ready for battle. He summoned the magistrates to surrender, or at least to send the women and children to a place of safety. His summons was refused, and a drummer-boy, who had accompanied his messenger, wantonly killed. Furious at this second and more brutal disregard of the laws of civilised warfare, Montrose promised Macdonald the sack of the rebellious town, and bade the battle begin.

As at Tippermuir the Irish held the centre; Rollo commanded on the right, Nathaniel Gordon on the left. The cavalry were on the two wings, interspersed with musketeers and bowmen. Montrose, well mounted, clad in coat and trews, with a bunch of oats in his bonnet—a *whimsy* adopted by all his infantry—was everywhere his keen eye told him there was need of his services. The fighting was hot while it lasted, and at one moment the left flank of the Royalists was within an ace of being turned. But Montrose brought up the horse and a fresh supply of musketeers from the right wing in the nick of time, and the Covenanters having no one to take advantage of the crisis, the danger was averted. The fifty troopers performed wonders, and the Irish fought like trained soldiers. In the end good leadership and discipline prevailed over numbers, and a general charge led by Montrose in person decided the day.

Within two hours after the first shot was fired the army of the Covenant was in flight. Balfour, who seems to have played no part in the battle, galloped off north across the Don with his cavalry. The foot were cut down as they ran, and the victorious Royalists burst into the town at the heels of the fugitives. Then followed a hideous scene. Montrose would not, or could not, retract the promise he had given in a moment of anger, and the wild Irish ran riot through the defenceless town. The unarmed citizens were butchered like sheep in the streets; the better sort were stripped before death, that their clothes might not be soiled with their blood; women and little children were slaughtered for bewailing their dead, and those women were happiest who expiated their tears with life. For three days the sack continued, without any interference, so far as we know, on the part of Montrose. Hitherto we have invariably seen him courteous and humane to a defeated foe, and always where it was in his power active to spare a defenceless people, and as such we shall find him hereafter. On this solitary occasion he outdoes the worst brutalities of the German wars. It was a mistake as well as a crime. It turned the scale against him in many wavering minds; and it inflamed the anger and fear of his enemies to a savage and unrelenting hatred which was destined to bear bitter fruit upon a later day. A price was now set upon his head, and Argyll openly offered a reward of £20,000 to any man who should bring it in by fair means or foul.

It was now felt that some more serious measures must be taken with this terrible enemy. Argyll's pursuit of Macdonald had slackened since he learned that the

Irish had joined hands with Montrose; but he was still laboriously plodding after them with three thousand of his Campbells. To these were now added two regiments from the regular army in England, and a strong force of cavalry. These reinforcements did not quicken Argyll's pace, but they prevented Montrose from giving battle to a foe whom above all others he longed to meet on a fair field. His little force had been still further diminished by the despatch of Macdonald with half his men into the Western Highlands to beat up recruits among the men of his name, who had been from time immemorial the sworn foes of Mac Callum More. For some weeks therefore the nimble Cavalier was forced to content himself with leading his heavy-footed, heavy-hearted pursuer a chase backwards and forwards through the Grampians, till at last he rested at Fyvie Castle on the Ythan, in the north-east corner of Aberdeenshire.

Here he was nearly caught napping. Argyll had crept within two miles of the castle before Montrose knew that he had so much as crossed the Grampians. It was a dangerous moment for the King's Lieutenant. He dared not risk a battle on the open ground: the castle would not stand a siege; and to make matters worse, the Royalists had run short of ammunition. But behind the castle rose a rugged hill, crowned with trees and roughly defended with some farm enclosures. Here Montrose stood at bay. The pewter vessels of the castle were melted into bullets, and the first attack of the Covenanters supplied the defenders with powder. Argyll's men were half-way up the hill, when Montrose, turning to a young Irishman whom Macdonald had left in charge as his lieutenant, said, "Come, O'Cahan, what are you about?

Take some of your handiest fellows, drive those rascals from our defences, and see that we are not troubled with them again." The brave young soldier rushed down the hill at the head of his men, drove the Covenanters pell-mell before him, and returned in safety with several bags of powder. As they came back into their lines, one of the Irishmen said, looking at the powder, "We must at them again; the stingy rogues have left us no bullets." The jest was soon made earnest. As Argyll's foot retired, the horse came up on another side against the little body of Royalist troopers. But Montrose saw the movement, and leading some of his musketeers round the brow of the hill, poured so hot a volley into the Covenanting squadrons, that they descended the slope much faster than they had climbed it. This was enough for Argyll. He withdrew his men beyond the Ythan, and Montrose marched back unmolested to Blair-Athole.

This extraordinary campaign—this "strange coursing" as Baillie shrewdly called it—could not continue. It was now November. The rains of autumn were already turning into the snows of winter. The mountains would soon be passable only for wolves and eagles. Argyll turned from a pursuit for which he had no heart, led his men back to Edinburgh, and resigning his commission to the Estates retired to his own country. The road into the Lowlands lay open. Now was the time to put in practice that plan which Montrose had always kept steadily in view. This mountain warfare against irregular levies led by incompetent generals was but a waste of good powder and shot. If he could descend into the Lowlands with a force sufficient to bring Leven

back over the Border, his promise to the King would be redeemed. Macdonald had rejoined him with the rest of the Irishmen and five hundred stout fellows of his name, Macdonalds of Glengarry, Clanronald, Keppoch, and Glencoe. Camerons from Lochaber, Stewarts from Appin, Farquharsons from Braemar, had also gathered to the Standard. Surely now he was strong enough to put his cherished design into practice. But his Lowland officers demurred. They were weary of a campaign where victory brought no solid fruits, and where the advance of one day seemed to be inevitably followed by the retreat of the next. The invitations and promises of Argyll had begun to work. They knew that pardon and preferment awaited every deserter from the royal cause, and though they had no design of betraying Montrose, they thought the time favourable for making their own peace. Under pretence of being unfit to face the hardships of a winter campaign, one after another took leave of his General. The brave Airlie, for all his sixty years, and his sons alone stood by him, and Nathaniel Gordon, who, though he left his leader, left him on the King's service. Montrose let the recreants go without a word, and turned to the Highlanders. They too deprecated a descent on the Lowlands, but for a different reason. These Macdonalds and Camerons were ready enough to fight under the royal banner, but they must fight against their own foe. They hated King Campbell more than they loved King Charles. Between all who bore the name of Macdonald and all who bore the name of Campbell there had been war to the knife for many generations. There was hardly, indeed, a clan in all the Highlands of Scotland which had not a grudge

to pay against the Race of Diarmid. Beyond the great mountain barrier with which Nature had guarded the domains of Mac Callum More lay a land, rough indeed and sparsely cultivated, but rich in fat cattle and well-stocked homesteads. Argyll was used to say that he had rather lose a hundred thousand crowns than that any mortal man should know the way by which an army could enter his country. There were men now at Montrose's side who knew that way as well as Argyll himself. Something clearly must be done. Neither his temperament nor his position would suffer Montrose to be idle. He could not hope to keep his men together without pay, and pay was only to be found in the pockets of a defeated enemy. Moreover, to strike a blow at Argyll in his own home was in some sort to do the King's service, and in a sort not uncongenial to himself when no better was possible. He agreed, therefore, to a plan which it was not altogether in his power to refuse, and in the first week of December the westward march began.

They marched in three divisions. Montrose led one, Alaster Macdonald another, and the third was commanded by the Captain of Clanronald. On December 13th they struck down through those mountains whose secrets had been so jealously guarded right into the heart of the promised land. At the first rumour of their approach Argyll had fled from Inveraray in a fishing-boat, leaving his clansmen to shift for themselves. For upwards of a month the triumphant Macdonalds carried fire and sword through the length and breadth of the country. Every unfortified dwelling was sacked and burned to the ground; every head of cattle not wanted

for the destroyers' consumption was slaughtered. Montrose would have spared the people if he could; but a Macdonald with a sword in his hand could give no quarter to a Campbell, and when Montrose was not by to save him every son of the accursed race old enough to bear arms was ruthlessly cut down where he was found. By the end of January the work was done: to the lands of Argyll had been meted the measure their owners had never spared to measure to others; and leaving a smouldering waste behind him Montrose turned leisurely northwards through Lochaber.

He had reached Kilcummin, where Fort-Augustus now stands, at the head of Loch Ness, when he heard news which made him pause. In front Seaforth was barring the way with five thousand men, his own Mackenzies and others from the hardy northern shires. Behind him Argyll was coming up with all the Campbells he could muster and some Lowland levies hastily gathered to his aid. To meet these two armies Montrose had only his Irishmen, a handful of Airlie's troopers, and such of the Highlanders as had not yet made off with their plunder, barely fifteen hundred men in all. He made his choice in an instant. Only thirty miles off, down the road by which he had just ascended the valley, Argyll lay at Inverlochy three thousand strong. But that road was certain to be watched by Argyll's scouts, and this time Montrose was determined that his enemy should not escape him. There was another road by which the Campbells might be reached in flank at a point where no retreat was possible. It was a road rarely trodden even in summer by any foot save that of the deer or wolf, and now, when winter lay white on the

mountains and the passes were choked with snow, shunned even by those wild travellers. But any road that led to his enemy was a good road for Montrose, and the dauntless spirit of their General beat high in the hearts of his men. Striking southward over the rugged shoulder of Corryarrick, through the bleak wastes of Glen Roy and Glen Spean, now wading waist high through the snow, and now clambering among the bare mountain peaks of that lonely land, by day and night the little host held on its painful way. On the evening of February 1st, on the second day after leaving Kilcummin, they saw from the skirts of Ben Nevis the towers of Inverlochy and the moonlit waters of Loch Eil.

The castle of Inverlochy stood, as all that is left of it still stands, at the juncture of Loch Eil and Loch Linnhe beneath the mighty shadow of Ben Nevis. The Campbells lay in the narrow strip of plain between the mountain and the shore. For them there was no escape if defeated; but unfortunately for his honour a way of escape lay open to their chief. His galley lay at her moorings on the lake, and in the middle of the night he was put secretly on board to await in ignominious security the chances of the day, leaving his people to fight for his name and their lives under his cousin Sir Duncan Campbell of Auchinbreck. He excused himself by an injury to his arm which disabled him from using a sword, an excuse that no other man then alive in Scotland would have ventured to plead in the face of his foe.

Though their scouts had brought word early in the evening of an enemy holding the passes above them in

force, the Campbells could not believe that enemy to be Montrose. Even the imagination of a Highlander, inured as he was to every form of activity and endurance, could not conceive the possibility of that wonderful march; and supposing that they would have only to deal with some Macdonalds and Camerons gathered to defend their homes from ravage, they slept securely through the night. But when with the first rays of morning they heard from the dark mountain overhead the trumpets pealing the point of war which had been ever used by Scotsmen to salute the standard of their king, they knew too well who was before them. Auchinbreck was a brave and experienced soldier but he had little confidence in the Lowland levies, and even his own men were better, he knew, at giving than receiving the attack. Still numbers must be on his side, and his men were fresh. The enemy could not be many, and must be weary and ill-fed. Ill-fed in truth they were; they had not tasted bread since they left Kilcummin; even Montrose and Airlie had to break their fast on a little meal softened with cold water. But all weariness had vanished at the sight of the enemy; and for the food, they comforted themselves with the assurance of better fare before sunset.

The battle of Inverlochy was little more than a repetition of the battle of Tippermuir. Montrose now led the centre, where the Highlanders fought who would follow no man to battle but the King's Lieutenant. Alaster Macdonald led on the right, and O'Cahan, the hero of Fyvie, on the left. Auchinbreck had placed the Lowland regiments on either wing, himself commanding the Campbells in the centre. The former discharged their

muskets and ran so soon as they saw Montrose's fierce warriors burst from the mountain and heard the wild yell with which they came bounding over the plain. The Campbells fought bravely, but unsupported and overlapped they at last too broke and fled. Some pressed into the water to reach their chief's galley, but Argyll had hoisted his sails so soon as he saw that all was lost, and made off down the lake heedless of his drowning clansmen. Others fled southwards along the beach and were cut down as they ran. Some made for the castle, but were driven back by the troopers into the open ground. Quarter was given to the Lowlanders, but Montrose could win no quarter from his men for the Campbells. Fifteen hundred of the great clan perished on that fatal day, including Auchinbreck himself and many gentlemen of rank. On the other side only three private soldiers were killed; but many were wounded, and among them Sir Thomas Ogilvy, by whose death, a few days after the battle, Montrose lost a staunch friend and the King a brave and accomplished officer.

Montrose had won a great and important victory. He had completely broken Argyll's power in the Highlands, and indeed for many years to come the mighty Clan Campbell was but the shadow of its former name. It is small wonder that his head grew hot with success, and that he wrote to the King as though all Scotland lay already at his feet. "I doubt not," ran his triumphant words, "that before the end of this summer I shall be able to come to your majesty's assistance with a brave army, which, backed with the justice of your majesty's cause, will make the rebels in England as well as in Scotland feel the just rewards of rebellion. Only give

me leave, after I have reduced this country to your majesty's obedience, and conquered from Dan to Beersheba, to say to your majesty then, as David's general did to his master, 'Come thou thyself, lest this country be called by my name.'"

CHAPTER IX

THE CAMPAIGN IN THE HIGHLANDS

(AULDEARN—ALFORD—KILSYTH)

Had Montrose been strong enough to march at once on the capital, it is possible that he might have found himself master of Scotland, and his promise to the King fulfilled sooner than he had expected. It is certain that those in Edinburgh who knew the truth felt that they were for the moment powerless to stop him. On such a stroke, however, even he dared not venture. Cavalry he had none, save the few troopers who barely sufficed for an escort to the Standard, and without cavalry he could not hope to hold his own in Lowland warfare. Nor for such warfare could he rely on the Highlanders, even should they consent to follow him so far from their homes. In the sudden onset, the struggle hand to hand, the headlong pursuit, a general need wish to lead no better soldiers; but in the calculated movements of a regular campaign they could not be trusted. They knew no discipline save obedience to their own chiefs, no mode of fighting save to shout and fall on. To rally them after defeat was as difficult as to keep them in hand after a victory. Montrose therefore held on northwards up the valley of the Ness, on the

road he was marching when he had turned back on Argyll.

The news of his great victory had preceded him. As he advanced, Seaforth and his Mackenzies fell back, and when he halted at Elgin the proud chief of Kintail appeared before him as a suppliant for the royal pardon. Nor was Seaforth the only waverer who had taken to heart the lesson taught Argyll. Sir James Grant came in with three hundred of his men, and many of the smaller lairds. Now, too, appeared a more welcome ally than all the Grants and Mackenzies could furnish. Nathaniel Gordon's errand had been done. Weary of a yoke at which he had always secretly fretted, and of a cause which seemed to lead only to defeat and disgrace, Lord Gordon now frankly offered his sword to Montrose. Nor did he come alone. His brother Lord Lewis, whom he brought with him, was destined indeed to prove a hindrance rather than a help, but a well-mounted and well-furnished troop of the gentlemen of his house had also followed their young chief. Thus reinforced on the side where he was weakest, Montrose turned to face his enemies once more.

The Estates had now recovered from their panic. In the first transports of their fear, when the news came down from Inverlochy, they had sought comfort in solemnly pronouncing doom of death and forfeiture on the traitor James Graham, sometime Earl of Montrose, and on all who abetted him in his treason; and the Kirk had as solemnly discharged against him the thunders of its excommunication. For himself such idle words were nothing to Montrose; but it was not

his cue to pass any accusation of his enemies unchallenged, or to let any judgment go against him by default. It was on the justice of his cause, on his own consistency that he wished especially to be understood to rely. He therefore published an answer to this sentence, framed on the same lines as his Declaration from Dumfries, but in a bolder spirit and more explicit terms. He recapitulated the causes which led Scotland to renew her ancient Covenant "as the only safest and fairest way for preservation of religion and liberty, which was so opposed by the prelates and their adherents that, by misinformation, they moved our dread sovereign to threaten us on both sides with arms." He reminded his countrymen that for this purpose he had gone with the Covenant even farther than was strictly warrantable till the King, "being informed of the lawfulness of our proceedings and honest intentions," had granted, first at Berwick and afterwards more fully at Ripon, all that they could fairly and reasonably ask. Thus far he had gone with them; farther, no true subject of the Crown, no true lover of his country, no true Covenanter could go. It was when he found "the prevailing party to intend more than they did pretend," to the prejudice of religion and liberty, to the ruin of lawful authority, to the abuse of the real spirit of the National Covenant,—it was then that he left them. It was then that "we were constrained to suffer them to deviate without us, with the multitude misled by them, whose eyes they seal in what concerns religion, and hearts they steal away in what concerns religion,—and there we left them."[1]

[1] *Memorials of Montrose*, i. 215.

The Estates, however, could not afford to rely on the spiritual arm alone. James Graham, the excommunicated traitor, was still, outside the walls of Edinburgh, the Marquis of Montrose; and the Marquis of Montrose at the head of an army was not a foe to be safely left to the vengeance of Church and Parliament. The strongest force they had yet put into the field was despatched northwards under General Baillie, who had been recalled from England for the purpose, and Sir John Hurry, a Cavalier who had apparently found in his prison at Newcastle convincing arguments in favour of the Covenant.

But before the southern march began a heavy blow fell on Montrose from no earthly hand. His eldest son, a gallant lad in his sixteenth year, died at Gordon Castle. He had followed his father through the winter's campaign, and the strain had proved too heavy for his young constitution. Nor was this all. The second son, a boy of eleven, was snatched from his lessons by Hurry in a raid on the town of Montrose, and sent a prisoner to Edinburgh. At the same time old Airlie fell dangerously sick, and was removed to Strathbogie under a strong escort of Highlanders. Thus weakened in numbers, and with a heavy heart, Montrose took the field.

He was now resolved at all hazards to make for the Lowlands. The answer to his despatch from Inverlochy had urged him to press southwards with all speed to meet the King, who was now bent on carrying the war into Scotland, and had promised an immediate reinforcement of cavalry. The summons matched too well with his own wishes to be disregarded. But as the

days passed, and the little army drew steadily down the coast to the Tay, no sign could be seen of the promised succours. And the little army grew daily smaller. Baillie, a brave man, but a cautious rather than a brilliant soldier, would not be forced into a battle. Montrose had not spared his enemies by the way. Royalist and Covenanter made war in the same fashion, and as Argyll had done, so did Montrose. From Inverness to Stonehaven his course was marked by blackened walls and wasted fields. From his strong castle of Dunnottar Marischal saw his broad lands harried by the soldiers of his old friend whom he had not the courage to join, and derived what comfort he could from the assurance of the godly Mr. Cant, that the smoke which he saw rising from his worthless worldly goods would be a sweet-smelling incense in the nostrils of the Lord. But an army marching through a hostile country cannot be burdened with spoil, and the Highlanders, who looked for each morning to bring a repetition of Inverlochy, deserted daily. Some of the gentlemen asked leave to return for the protection of their own lands, on which, so soon as the coast was clear, a summary vengeance was sure to fall, and the leave could not in prudence be refused. When Montrose reached Dunkeld he could muster only six hundred foot and two hundred horse. For the present the Lowlands were safe.

But it was not in Montrose's nature to turn from his enemies without striking a blow. Dundee was but a day's march, as he had taught his men to march, from Dunkeld; it was a noted stronghold of rebellion, on which punishment would not be wasted. Leaving Dunkeld at daybreak on April 3rd, the next morning

saw him before Dundee. The town would not surrender, and could make little resistance. It was carried by storm, and Highlanders and Irishmen were soon busy at their favourite work. In the midst of the tumult came the news that Baillie and Hurry, who were believed to be far on the other side of the Tay, were outside the walls. To fight them was impossible with a few hundred men wild with drink and plunder; to secure a safe retreat in such conditions seemed equally hopeless. No other man would probably have thought it worth his while to attempt what Montrose now successfully performed. He stopped the plundering, sent off his foot in such order as he could command, and with his cavalry and a few picked musketeers prepared to cover their retreat. As he marched out of the eastern gate in the gathering dusk, the enemy entered by the western. Baillie at once ordered his dragoons to charge, but they were driven back with some empty saddles. Seeing Montrose heading for the eastern coast, the wary Covenanter stayed the pursuit, and struck north to bar the way into the hills. Montrose had divined the move. At Arbroath he turned abruptly in his tracks, and slipping back past the unconscious Covenanters in the night, headed straight for the Grampians. The sun had risen before Baillie discovered his mistake. But Montrose was not yet safe. He had reached Careston Castle on the Esk; his men, worn out with the day's plundering and the night's marching, had flung themselves on the ground and were sleeping soundly when the enemy's cavalry came in sight. Only a few of the sleepers could be aroused, but they were enough. The dragoons remembered their reception on the previous evening, and drew off. Before

the foot could come up Montrose had his men safe among the hills. Of all his extraordinary exploits none so impressed the great soldiers of Europe with his consummate generalship as the retreat from Dundee. "I have often," wrote Wishart, "heard those who were esteemed the most experienced officers, not in Britain only but in France and Germany, prefer this march of Montrose to his most celebrated victories."

But generalship without men will not win battles. The weary work of recruiting began again. Macdonald had already been sent to his old ground in the Western Highlands. Lord Gordon was now sent into his own country, whither his weathercock of a brother had just retired in a huff. On the other hand, Aboyne had made his way out of Carlisle and rejoined his chief. A Gordon was always welcome, nor had his young aide-de-camp yet shown Montrose any trace of those capricious humours which were destined to eventually wreck the King's cause and his own. Meanwhile the enemy had divided. Hurry had gone northward to take order with the Gordons, while Baillie was watching the Highlands from Perth. Macdonald had now returned with a fresh levy of his kinsmen. If Montrose could slip between the two armies and join hands with Lord Gordon, he might fight either at leisure. This was done. At Skene, on the upper Dee, he met Lord Gordon stronger than before in both foot and horse. Aboyne made a successful raid on Aberdeen, and returned with some much-needed powder and ball. By the end of April the King's Lieutenant was once more ready for battle. The Gordons were now his very good friends; he decided, therefore, for their sake to attack the northern army first.

Hurry, for all his inconstancy, was neither a timid nor an unskilful soldier, and as he far outnumbered the Royalists, he had no wish to avoid a battle; but he intended to fight on his own ground. He led Montrose on by cautiously retreating, till he had drawn him into the heart of a country where not a man called him friend, and then turned on him. On the evening of May 8th Montrose was encamped at the little village of Auldearn, midway between Inverness and Elgin. Here Hurry hoped to surprise him by a night march; but when within a few miles of the village some of his men discharged their muskets to clear them of the damp powder, and through the driving wind and rain the Royalist sentinels caught the sound. Montrose had little time to make his arrangements, but one glance at the ground in the gray morning light taught him all he needed to know.

The village of Auldearn stretched north and south along a ridge, and below the western point of the ridge the ground sloped down to a marsh. On the upper part of this slope, at its northern end, among the walled gardens and enclosures of the villagers, Montrose placed the Irishmen with the royal standard, to give them the appearance of the main body. The rest of his foot and all the cavalry he kept out of sight behind the southern end of the ridge. For his centre he had merely a few men placed in front of the cottages as though they were the pickets of a larger force. If Hurry fell into the trap, and Macdonald obeyed orders, Montrose could hurl the whole of his left wing on the right flank of the Covenanters when engaged with the Irish, where the ground was open and firm for cavalry. Hurry did fall

into the trap, but Macdonald's rashness nearly caused disaster. Instead of keeping within his lines, he advanced down the hill to meet the full brunt of the main attack. The Irish fought bravely, and Alaster himself performed prodigies of valour. But they were outnumbered, driven back, and surrounded. It was whispered to Montrose that his right wing was broken. Any sign of uneasiness might be fatal. The knowledge that his trained troops were routed might damp the ardour of the others. He turned gaily to Gordon. "Why are we lingering here, my dear lord," he said aloud, "when our friend Macdonald is driving the enemy before him on the right? Shall all the glory of the day be his?" He then gave the word to advance. The chivalry of the Gordons sprang forward with their young chief at their head. They charged not in the old fashion under cover of pistol-fire, but as Cromwell's Ironsides had charged on Marston Moor. Sword in hand they rode straight at Hurry's flank, while Montrose and Aboyne brought up the rest of the infantry. The Covenanting dragoons could not stand the shock, and their flight threw the right wing into disorder. Montrose and Aboyne pressed on, while Macdonald rallied his Irishmen and led them down again on the centre. The day was won. Hurry escaped with the remnant of his horse to Inverness; most of the foot perished on the field. No quarter was given, and the pursuit followed fast and far. A few days before the battle a young Gordon, who had been carried wounded from a skirmish to a friend's house, had been murdered in his bed by a party of Covenanters, and this brutal deed had sharpened his kinsmen's swords. Between two and three thousand

of the enemy are said to have fallen on the field or in the flight. All their baggage, ammunition, and money remained in the hands of the victors.

In the field the Covenanters seemed powerless to make head against Montrose, but they could strike a blow at him nearer home. The aged Napier, now past his seventieth year—"old and not fit for fighting," as he pathetically pleaded to the Committee—was heavily fined and flung into prison. His son, the young Master, had made his escape in time, and had fought gallantly by his uncle's side at Auldearn; but his two daughters, Lilias and Margaret, Lady Stirling of Keir, shared their father's fate. Among their fellow-captives, but not companions for no intercourse was permitted them, were Keir himself and young Lord Graham with his tutor. Their imprisonment was close, but their condition was easy compared with that of Crawford, Ogilvy, and the other Royalists, who suffered the treatment of the lowest criminals in the Tolbooth. To this time, too, belongs the only trace of Montrose's wife that history vouchsafes between the records of her marriage and her death, in a warrant of the Committee of Estates entrusting her with the care of her third son Robert. From this it would appear that she had either contrived to make her peace with her husband's enemies, or that her sympathies were known to be with her own family. Southesk and his son Carnegie had always been staunch, though passive, adherents to the Covenant.

But it was no time to brood on private wrongs, or to redress them. Hurry with the fragments of his scattered army had rejoined Baillie, and a fresh force under

Lindsay was advancing from the Lowlands. Montrose had been obliged to pay the usual price of his victories, and had again retreated to the hills till the gaps in his ranks could be refilled. But in one respect he was stronger than he had yet been since he first raised the King's banner in Scotland. A warm friendship had sprung up between him and the heir of the Gordons, which, on the younger man's part, showed itself in a chivalrous and unquestioning devotion. Nothing could now separate him from his general's side; his father's commands were disregarded; fresh levies were raised, and the waverers recalled to their duty. Still, without the Highlanders, and with only half the Irishmen, Montrose could not have shown fight had not the Covenanters been divided against themselves. Baillie was not his own master. His movements were not only dictated from Edinburgh, but were still further hampered by a committee appointed to assist him in the field. This committee included such experienced commanders as Argyll, Balfour of Burleigh, and Elcho, and was unlikely therefore to inspire much confidence in any man who had heard of Inverlochy, Aberdeen, and Tippermuir. "Armies," it has been pertinently observed by the historian who has told how another and a worthier Argyll met his fate, "armies have triumphed under leaders who professed no very eminent qualifications. But what army commanded by a debating club ever escaped discomfiture and disgrace?" Moreover Lindsay professed himself unable to fight with his undisciplined troops, and Baillie was ordered to supply him with fifteen hundred of his own trained soldiers in exchange for less than half the number of raw recruits. Even

then Lindsay would not fight, but turning southwards gallantly led his men to harry the unprotected lands of Athole. Montrose was thus left free to deal with Baillie and the committee.

Baillie was now in a strong position at Keith in Aberdeenshire, from which he could neither be dislodged nor tempted by offer of battle. But the road to the Lowlands lay open, and if the Royalists took that road the Covenanters could not choose but follow. Montrose therefore marched due south, and crossing the Don took up his position at Alford, a small town some ten miles west of Kintoul. By this time Baillie had learned how weak Montrose was, and thought that he might risk a battle. But when he came in sight of his enemy, on the morning of July 2nd, he hesitated. Montrose was posted, as at Auldearn, on the crest of a hill. Between him and the Covenanters lay a marsh, and beyond the marsh was the river which could be crossed at only one spot directly in front of his lines. These were conditions in which a more daring captain than Baillie might have been excused from engaging such an adversary as Montrose. But the committee would not hear of retreating, and even Balcarres, who commanded the cavalry, and who was something of a soldier as well as a brave man, was urgent to fight. Baillie was powerless to refuse. He gave the orders he could not withhold, crossed the river and advanced courageously to his fate.

Montrose had placed his few horse on either wing, mixed, as at Aberdeen, with some Irish musketeers. Lord Gordon commanded on the right, Aboyne on the left. The centre, where Huntly's Highland tenants

fought, was led by the brave Glengarry, who had never left Montrose since he had charged at his side down the slopes of Ben Nevis. Here, too, was the General himself with the royal standard. The reserve was posted behind the crest of the hill under the Master of Napier. In infantry the two armies were equal, about two thousand strong on either side; but Montrose had only two hundred and fifty horse to meet the six hundred under Balcarres. The battle was begun by the cavalry. For a time the superior numbers of the Covenanting dragoons and the gallantry of their leader made the issue doubtful, till Nathaniel Gordon, who fought with his young chief on the right, cried to the Irish to throw down their guns and hamstring the enemy's horses with their swords. This was enough; the left wing broke at once, and the right, seeing their companions flying, soon followed their example. The victorious Gordons swept in from either flank on the centre; Glengarry led his claymores down the hill; Montrose and his nephew brought up the reserve, and another battle was won for King Charles.

The victory was complete; but it was dearly bought by the death of Lord Gordon, who fell, struck by a shot from behind, in the final charge. Montrose could have lost no more devoted friend or more staunch ally; and indeed the whole army mourned for the gallant young soldier, who had endeared himself to all by his courage and courtesy, his high spirits and winning manners. The body was conveyed under the escort of the General himself and a chosen guard to Aberdeen, where, with all the honours that the time permitted, it was laid in the Gordons' vault in the old cathedral church of St. Machar.

Matters had now come to a crisis in Scotland. Lindsay was the only general left in arms for the Covenant, and on Lindsay alone no reliance could be placed. Parliament had been driven by the plague from Edinburgh to Stirling. On July 8th, six days after the disaster at Alford, a vote was passed for levying ten thousand foot and five hundred horse from the counties south of the Tay. Perth was appointed for the muster, and on the 24th of the month Parliament was transferred to that city to watch and hasten the work. Baillie was retained in command, but against his urgent entreaties, for the same committee that had driven him to defeat at Alford was to ensure his failure again.

Meanwhile reinforcements were pouring in to Montrose. Macdonald had rejoined him with the rest of the Irish and fifteen hundred Highlanders. Patrick Graham brought up the Atholemen. Stout old Airlie, now restored to health, rode in with a troop of Ogilvies; and after some delay Aboyne appeared with a strong following of Gordons. In the first days of August Montrose was ready to take the field again with the largest force that had yet been mustered under the King's banner in Scotland. He was anxious for battle, but he was resolved to choose his own ground. The King's affairs were now desperate indeed. Naseby had been lost; Wales was growing cold; there was no hope from Ireland; a union with Montrose seemed almost the sole chance left. If Montrose could strike one stout blow south of the Forth that union might yet be possible. Wherever he led Baillie must follow, or leave the Lowlands open; and Montrose had a shrewd suspicion that

the raw Perthshire levies might, like his own Highlanders, be unwilling to go too far or stay too long from their homes. His men were as keen for battle as their general. Till his reinforcements came in Montrose had been obliged to content himself with hovering round Perth, at one time mounting his infantry on baggage and cart horses, to convey the notion that he was strong in cavalry. In one of the skirmishes provoked by these demonstrations, a party of the Covenanters had fallen on a body of women in Methven Wood, near the city, the wives, or, as Captain Dalgetty would have said, the leaguer-lasses of the Irish soldiers, and had butchered them all. The men clamoured for vengeance, and Montrose was now strong enough to promise it. Slipping down from Dunkeld, he passed almost under the walls of Perth over the ground of his old triumph at Tippermuir, and, crossing the Forth above Stirling, came on the evening of August 14th to Kilsyth about nine miles from Glasgow. Here he learned that Lanark, with a strong muster of the Hamilton tenantry from Clydesdale, was on the march to join Baillie, while Eglinton and Glencairn were raising the Western Lowlands. The blow must be struck before these reinforcements could come up, and must be struck at once, for Lanark was reported to be only twelve miles distant.

The Covenanters had not lingered in pursuit, and on the night of the 14th the two armies bivouacked within three miles of each other. Baillie would have preferred to wait for Lanark, but the committee overruled him. To delay even an hour was folly. Their enemy lay in an open space surrounded by hills, in a trap, as these wiseheads thought, from which there must be no escape.

Numbers, too, were on their side. The Royalists had but a little over four thousand foot and five hundred horse to set against the six thousand foot and eight hundred horse nominally commanded by Baillie. Montrose was equally confident. He had shown his men the enemy, and asked if they would fight or retreat. The answer was unanimous for fight. He bade his soldiers strip to their shirts, for the day was hot, and they would have to charge uphill. He could not suppose that even such generals as Argyll and Elcho would forego their advantage of ground, while rough or smooth was all one to his men. Yet even this monstrous folly was forced on the unfortunate Baillie. The hills surrounding the meadow in which the Royalists lay were for the most part steep and rugged, up which a Highlander would scamper like a deer, but the heavier-footed and heavier-armed Lowland troops would hardly descend in good order. But on the right of the Covenanters' position lay a smoother and gentler declivity, by which they might march directly down upon Montrose's left flank—if Montrose would let them. In vain Baillie warned his sapient advisers that the movement was a perilous one in the very face of an enemy, that it would lead them from a superior position to one where they would have no advantage if they gained it, and which the enemy could easily seize first if he detected their design. In vain he reminded them that this was their last chance, and that the loss of this day would be the loss of the kingdom. The committee persisted, and Baillie, disclaiming all further responsibility, proceeded to carry his fatal orders into effect.

There was only one chance for the Covenanters. By

keeping behind the crest of the hills they might conceal their movements from the enemy till they had reached their ground. This chance was lost. A party of soldiers crept down from their ranks over the ridge and attacked Montrose's advanced guard of Highlanders, which was posted under Macdonald in some enclosures on the slope above the meadow. Macdonald easily drove them back, and then started up the hillside in pursuit. It was done against orders, but it was well done. Right up the hill pressed the nimble Highlanders, and over it into the very heart of the straggling column. At the same time Montrose, seeing Baillie's design, sent some of the Gordon infantry round to the left to anticipate it. They were not enough, and a party of their mounted kinsmen, whom Aboyne led to their aid, recoiled before the heavy cuirassiers of the Covenant. For a time things looked badly for the Royalists in this quarter, but for a time only. Montrose ordered Airlie to the rescue. The gallant old Earl led his Ogilvies to the charge up the smoother ground; Nathaniel Gordon followed with the rest of his cavalry; while Montrose led his main body up the hill after the Highlanders. The head and centre of his column being now in hopeless confusion, the men fighting at random and the officers asking each other what was to be done, Baillie galloped to the rear to bring up the Fife levies. They were already in flight. There was nothing now left for those who could do so but to follow their example. The stupid authors of all this disaster were among the first to leave the field. Some fled to Stirling, some to the Firth where they took ship for Berwick. Among the latter was Argyll, who thus for the third time

escaped by water from the man he dared not face on land. Most of the cavalry were able to save themselves, but on the luckless foot the slaughter in Methven Wood was amply avenged. For fourteen miles the ground was strewn with dead bodies; out of six thousand who had begun the fatal flank march at morning, scarce one hundred were alive at nightfall. The strength of the Covenant was broken in pieces like a potter's vessel. Montrose had fulfilled his boast. He was now in very truth master of all Scotland.

CHAPTER X

PHILIPHAUGH

The results of this crowning victory were soon manifested. Lanark fled to Berwick; the Western levies melted into air. Glasgow welcomed the conqueror with open gates and a promise of money. The Lowland lords came in from every side with greetings and proffers of service. The shires of Lanark, Renfrew, and Ayr, which had ever been a stronghold of fanaticism, sent deputations to sue for pardon. Edinburgh followed the example of Glasgow. The submission of her citizens was indeed complete and abject. The prisons were thrown open at the first sound of the victor's trumpet, and the captives implored to intercede for their jailers. They confessed their sins; they had been misled by crafty and seditious spirits; henceforward they would be true and loyal subjects, and would hold no communion with rebels. Men they could not offer for their King's service, for the pestilence had been raging in their narrow and crowded streets, but money was freely promised. All suppliants were graciously received, and bidden not to despair of the royal pardon.[1]

[1] It is not clear whether Lord Graham was still a prisoner in the castle, which does not seem to have surrendered with the city.

Montrose had now nobly redeemed his pledge. In six pitched battles he had swept the armies of the Covenant from off the face of Scotland. Wherever he had met them, under whatever conditions, he had out-generalled and out-fought them. From Dan to Beer-sheba the country, which twelve short months since had been the hotbed of rebellion, lay in abject submission at the feet of its defied and insulted sovereign. And this had been accomplished in the face of every discouragement, of broken promises, of cold or treacherous allies, without the material or supplies of a regular army, by the resolution, the courage, and the skill of a single man. There is nothing like it in the history of war.

And what was to come of it? Already before the battle of Kilsyth the King had made an effort to join his one victorious general, and had failed. Would he be more successful now? Digby was sanguine, and with Digby at his side Charles never lost heart. Rumours came down from the North of another victory, and this time on the English side of the Border. In this new dawn of hope the defeat on Rowton Heath faded into insignificance. Everything was arranged. On September 26th Charles was at Denbigh with two thousand cavalry, the only force now left him in the North. On the morrow he would march for Scotland. But on the morrow came a despatch from Byron at Chester, with intelligence that changed the whole

A few days before the battle of Kilsyth he had been committed by the Estates to the Earl of Dalhousie for his education, but it is not certain that his removal had been effected before the surrender. It would not have been safe for Montrose to have led his army into a plague-stricken town. The boy was not among the released prisoners, nor did he and his father ever meet again.

aspect of affairs. Another battle had indeed been fought, but not on the English side. A single day, a single hour almost, had destroyed the harvest of a year's victories. Montrose was in flight; his army had been cut to pieces; the Covenant was once more master of Scotland.

As usual jealousy and intrigue had been at work. The Highlanders, disappointed at being refused the plunder of Glasgow, and seeing no prospect of further booty, began to murmur. They had fought enough for King Charles; there was an enemy nearer home with whom they had not yet settled all accounts. Macdonald's thoughts were also turning in the same direction. He had just been knighted in the presence of the whole army by Montrose, who now bore the King's commission as Captain-General and Viceroy of Scotland, and had been profuse in expressions of gratitude for what still ranked among the highest honours in the sovereign's gift. But the thought of the vengeance and plunder to be won by leading his kinsmen to a fresh raid against the accursed Campbells was too much for Sir Alaster's loyalty. Before the end of August he had left the camp with the Highlanders, who had named him their captain, and most of his Irishmen. He promised indeed to return when his services were required; but it is doubtful whether his promise was ever intended to be kept, and it is certain that he and Montrose never met again. Five hundred of his men refused to follow him, vowing that not even at their own leader's call would they desert the general who had led them so often to victory. Aboyne was the next to go. Ever since the day of

Kilsyth he had been out of humour. He was not treated with sufficient respect in camp; his services had not been sufficiently represented to the King; it was all Ogilvy now with Montrose, and the heir of the Gordons would give place to no Ogilvy. The jealous young fool accordingly called his men out, and rode off to his own place. Four hundred horse and a large body of foot went with him. Out of all the gentlemen of his name, Nathaniel Gordon alone remained faithful. When Montrose broke up his camp at Bothwell and marched for the Border, his whole following numbered no more than five hundred Irishmen and less than a hundred troopers.

Still his heart was as high as ever, nor was his confidence less. The messenger who had brought his commission as Viceroy of Scotland had brought also an urgent message to lose no time in advancing to the Tweed, where the long-desired junction with the King was at last to be effected. The great Border Earls, Home and Roxburgh, had promised their co-operation. Traquair had hastened to make his peace with the stronger power, and his son Linton arrived in Montrose's camp with a troop of horse to confirm his father's loyalty. Douglas and Ogilvy were raising the West and Middle Marches, and though the house of Douglas was but a shadow of that great power which had once bearded kings upon their throne, it was still a name to conjure with in the Scottish Lowlands. If his new allies stood firm, all would yet go well for King Charles.

It was all a delusion. His new allies had never intended from the first to risk anything for King Charles, and most assuredly would they risk nothing

for his Viceroy. But they were equally resolved to run no risk for the Covenant, and even in his weakness Montrose was still a formidable foe. For the present, therefore, it was their cue to be loyal; but though profuse in their welcome to the King's General, as he drew down through the Lothians to the Tweed, they kept a watchful eye for the advancing banner of the Covenant. The news of Kilsyth and the humiliation of Edinburgh had stirred the Scottish troops in England to fury. All the horse they could muster, four thousand strong, was pressing fast northwards under David Leslie, one of the best cavalry officers of the age. As they streamed across the Border at Berwick, reinforced by two thousand foot from Newcastle, Home and Roxburgh surrendered without lifting a hand, and were even accused of having petitioned for arrest to save them from the possible vengeance of Montrose.

Montrose was already at Kelso when he learned the news. It was now impossible for him to advance. Of all his new allies Douglas had alone proved true. He had joined Montrose on the Gala with such troops as he had been able to raise; but, with the exception of his own personal friends and the gentlemen of his House, they were mostly raw clowns unused to arms and scarce able to manage their horses. Nor, such as they were, could they be trusted. Even the voice of a Douglas could hardly persuade his tenants to fight for a cause and under a leader whom they both feared and hated. The success of the King signified, in their eyes, the destruction of their religion; the success of Montrose signified a carnival of murder, lust, and rapine for the wild Irish savages whom he led to the destruction of his country. This

feeling had been carefully fostered by the Covenanters, till the simple peasants of the Lowlands heard the name of Montrose with the same feelings of terror and hatred that forty years later were inspired among their sons by the name of Dundee. On the eastern Border it was plain that there was no hope; but something might yet be done in the West which had promised so much but a short while since. Montrose broke up his camp at Kelso, and, striking off on a north-westerly course, came on the evening of September 12th to Selkirk.

It had been Leslie's design to make straight for the Forth to bar his enemy's retreat to the Highlands. But on his way through the Lothians he heard how weak that enemy was. It was commonly believed that the traitor was Traquair, a belief that receives some support from the fact that he about this time recalled his son from the Royalist camp. Through whatever channel the news came it at once changed Leslie's plans. He turned abruptly south and marched rapidly down Gala Water to meet Montrose.

The main body of the Royalists was encamped on Philiphaugh, a long and level meadow on the left bank of the Ettrick, immediately below its junction with the Yarrow. Behind rose the hills; in front ran the river; at the western end the ground sloped upwards to a wooded declivity known as Harehead-shaw. This strong position had been still further secured by some trenches hastily thrown up on either flank. Here lay the Irish infantry, with the country levies horse and foot, less than two thousand strong in all. But by some strange infatuation Montrose had fixed his own quarters in the town on

the opposite bank of the river with the best part of the horse and all his principal captains. His little army was thus divided in half, and his men separated from their officers, at the moment when the bravest and most skilful foe he had yet encountered was creeping on him through the darkness at the head of a force more than four times his strength. It is not surprising that Montrose should have been ignorant of Leslie's change of route when we remember that he was in the midst of a population bitterly hostile to himself and his cause. But that his own scouts should have suffered so large a force to advance unobserved within a mile of his lines is indeed inexplicable. If it be true, as one account reports, that they were mostly Traquair's tenants employed on this service as familiar with the country, the explanation is found. Wishart confesses that Montrose, whose custom had always hitherto been to post his own sentinels and give his own orders to his scouts, on this night left the duty to his officers, being busy with despatches for the King. The duty may have been negligently performed; the quarter from which Leslie was advancing may have been inefficiently patrolled, or even left altogether open. The night was dark and the morning misty. But even had the mist been thick as that which shrouded the "last, dim, weird battle of the west," it is not in the course of nature for four thousand horsemen and two thousand foot to draw within a mile without signifying their approach to the most careless ears. It is hard not to believe that there were some men abroad on the morning of the 13th, either in Selkirk or on Philiphaugh, who were aware of Leslie's advance. No excuse will serve to acquit Montrose and his officers of grave negli-

gence; but only treachery can make intelligible the extraordinary and overwhelming suddenness of Leslie's attack.[1]

Montrose had passed most of the night over his despatches and in consultation with his council, Crawford, Airlie, and Napier,—for the old man was not so unfit for fighting that he could not strike one blow for the King. From time to time reports were brought to him that all was well. At dawn his scouts came in swearing that they had scoured the country far and wide, and that there was not an enemy within ten miles. The day broke dark and chill, and the mist still lay heavy on the river-banks when Leslie, at the head of his troopers, burst in upon Philiphaugh. He had reached Melrose on the previous evening. Only six miles of country, patrolled, if Montrose's scouts spoke truth, in every direc-

[1] The various accounts of this battle are more than usually conflicting. Patrick Gordon makes out a very bad case indeed against Montrose, whom he declares to have been frequently warned during the evening of the 12th of an enemy's advance, and to have contented himself with transmitting these reports to his officers, relying on their assurances that all was well. He even asserts that one of Montrose's pickets was actually engaged with some of Leslie's men at the little village of Sunderland, four miles from Philiphaugh on the same side of the river, which, and not Melrose, he makes the Covenanters' headquarters for the night; and that Montrose, when informed of the affair, set it down to a mere drunken brawl. This is not credible; but it is clear that Montrose was both badly served by his officers, who allowed themselves to be deceived by the country-people, and himself guilty of gross negligence. I have followed Sir Walter Scott's account of the affair (*Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, part i. "Battle of Philiphaugh"; ed. 1830), who was evidently writing from local tradition as well as from contemporary narrative. For events which happened in his own neighbourhood the Sheriff of Selkirkshire is, I suspect, as good a guide as can be found.

tion, separated the two armies during the night. Before dawn he was on the march for Selkirk. A countryman guided him to a ford by which he crossed the Ettrick a mile below the town. As the soldiers of the royal army were getting leisurely under arms for an early parade the enemy was in their midst.

A scout came galloping into Selkirk with the news as Montrose sat at breakfast. Leaping into the saddle he dashed through the river, followed by his officers and a few score of troopers. Many of his cavalry never came into action at all. When he reached the ground his left wing was already broken; the raw Borderers had fled at the first sound of Leslie's trumpets. On the right the Irish stood firm. For these poor Ishmaelites there was no hope but in victory, and with their backs to the wood they fought like men to the last. So fiery was Montrose's charge that twice, at the head of one hundred and fifty horsemen, he drove back the whole strength of Leslie's squadrons. The gallant Airlie and his son, Napier and the young Master, Crawford and Douglas and Nathaniel Gordon, fought like paladins at their General's side. It was of no avail. A force that had been detached to cross the river above Selkirk broke in upon the right wing from the rear. Man after man the Irish were falling in their ranks; horse after horse broke riderless from those desperate charges. But still Montrose fought on, as though determined to die on the field he could not save. Then his friends urged retreat. The cause was not lost, they said, for a single repulse. Gathering the survivors round him for a last effort, he cut his way out through the press, and, followed by about fifty horsemen, galloped off the

field. Both the standards were saved. All else was lost.

About one hundred Irishmen still remained alive. They threw down their arms and asked for quarter. It was granted them; but for their wretched wives and children and the unarmed rabble of the camp there was no mercy. The horrid scene in Methven Wood was acted again, and they were slaughtered with every circumstance of the most inhuman brutality.[1] Nor was the bitterness of death past even for those who had trusted to Leslie's honour. On the morning after the battle they were brought out into the courtyard of Newark Castle and shot down in cold blood. On the march to Glasgow many prisoners were taken. Those of rank were reserved for trial. Eighty women and children, who had escaped the shambles at Philiphaugh, and were found wandering naked and half-starved among the hills, were flung in batches from the bridge at Linlithgow.

Never, perhaps, was the indomitable energy of Montrose more signally manifested than at this tremendous crisis. Within four days after he had spurred over Minchmoor in headlong flight he was busy in Athole issuing orders and raising fresh levies for the King, as though the rout at Philiphaugh had been but an evil dream. The Napiers were still with him, and Airlie and Crawford with a few troopers. If Macdonald would bring his men back, if the Gordons could once more be stirred to action, the royal banner would

[1] The revolting details were given at the time by Patrick Gordon, and have been copied by Napier in the *Memoirs of Montrose*, where the curious, if they will, may consult them.

soon wave over a fresh army in Scotland. And for a time things promised well. Macdonald, indeed, gave no sign; but the trusty Atholemen rose to the call, and with these Montrose hurried over the Grampians into the Gordons' country. Aboyne seemed to have shaken off his ill-humour, and joined him with a large muster of horse and foot. The enemy was divided. Middleton with the bulk of the cavalry lay at Turriff, watching Huntly who had again begun to show some signs of life; Leslie was still at Glasgow. It was to Glasgow that Montrose's hopes pointed; for there lay not only his most dangerous enemy but some of his dearest friends: the gallant Ogilvy, the good Spottiswoode, Nathaniel Gordon, and others, prisoners under sentence of an ignominious death. It were shame not to strike a blow for those who had never failed him. Duty, too, called him south as well as friendship. Glasgow lay between him and the Borders, and still, as ever, it was on the Borders that he looked for the King. Within less than a month Montrose, at the head of a stronger force than he had led into defeat at Philiphaugh, was once more on the march for the South.

It was a fatal move. Had he crushed Middleton first, he would have relieved Huntly from a present danger, and might have fixed the Gordons to his side. Now it was but the old story again. Aboyne was ordered by his father to return, and did not choose to disobey him. It is vain to speculate on Huntly's motives. Whether he acted from a sense of self-preservation, or from sheer jealousy of Montrose, he acted a part unworthy of the man who had once fearlessly professed his loyalty in the face of his enemies and was

hereafter to seal it with his life. Montrose had now no choice but to leave the prisoners in Glasgow to their fate. Had he known that Digby was then actually at Dumfries with the long-promised reinforcements, he might have pushed on at all hazards, and shortened the story of his life by a chapter. But he never learned the news of Charles's desperate effort to keep faith with him till long after it had failed. With a heavy heart he turned back to the shelter of the friendly mountains, and Digby, a bolder general in council than in the field, took refuge in the Isle of Man.

The shadows were now darkening fast round Montrose. As he re-entered Athole word was brought to him of his wife's death. To us she is but the shadow of a name, nor is there reason to suppose that she had ever shared her husband's feelings or shown any sympathy with his career. But she was the bride of his youth, the mother of the gallant boy who had fought at his side and who had been already snatched from him by an untimely fate. At the risk of his life he saw her buried in the town of Montrose, and was hunted back into Athole from the grave-side by Middleton's troopers. There a fresh sorrow awaited him. During his absence the aged Napier, worn out with the long struggle, had breathed his last, and was now carried to his well-earned rest in the church of Blair. The new year brought little comfort, though an interview with Huntly seemed for the moment likely to bear fruit. In the invigorating presence of Montrose the chief of the Gordons swore to hesitate no longer, and his sons, in Wishart's vigorous words, "wished damnation to themselves" if they were not true men for the future. If the Powers of Darkness took them at their word

they were assuredly damned. The Gordons were indeed summoned to arms, and some languid operations commenced; but no persuasions, no supplications even on Montrose's part, could induce Huntly to co-operate with him. Meanwhile, his friends met the fate from which he was powerless to save them. The Irish officers who had been brought alive from Philiphaugh had already been hanged without a trial in Edinburgh. Sir William Rollo, Sir Philip Nisbet, and young Ogilvy of Innerquharity, a handsome boy not eighteen years old, were beheaded at Glasgow.[1] Nathaniel Gordon, Alexander Guthrie, and William Murray now suffered the same fate at St. Andrews. Staunch Covenanter as he was, Tullibardine could not win his brother's life—even after a respite on the plea of insanity. Sir Robert Spottiswoode was the next victim. He had never borne arms against the Covenant, and had only a cane in his hand when taken prisoner in the flight from Philiphaugh; but as the King's Secretary for Scotland he had signed Montrose's commission, and he was the son of an Archbishop. Lord Ogilvy only escaped through the courage of his sister, who, with his wife and mother, had been permitted to visit him in prison. She took her brother's place in bed, while he passed out through the guards in her clothes. Argyll was furious at the escape of one of the hated House of Airlie, and all the influence of the Hamiltons was needed to save the brave woman from his anger.

[1] It was at the execution of Ogilvy ("a boy lately come from the schools," writes Guthrie) that the memorable words, which afterwards passed into a proverb, fell from the lips of the Reverend David Dickson.—*The work goes bonnily on!*

Yet still Montrose, hoping against hope, struggled on. All his relatives and friends were dead, in prison, or in exile. His lands had been laid waste, his castles burned to the ground. Only his sword was left that he could call his own. But he had drawn that sword at his King's command, and only at his King's command would he sheath it.

And now that command was given. Charles had fled in disguise from Oxford to the Scottish camp. He seems to have persuaded himself that he would be welcomed as an ally by men who were growing weary of a struggle now fast shaping itself to issues they had never dreamed of and for which they would assuredly have never fought. He found himself insulted as a prisoner. On the very day of his arrival he was imperiously requested by Lothian, as President of the Committee, to command James Graham to lay down his arms. "He who made you an Earl," was the spirited answer, "made James Graham a Marquis." But the time for such spirit was past. On May 19th Charles wrote from Newcastle directing Montrose to disband his forces, to leave Scotland, and to await further instructions in France. "This may at first justly startle you," wrote the unhappy King; "but I assure you that if for the present I should offer to do more for you, I could not do so much." Montrose replied that he should not presume to question his Majesty's commands, but obey them in all humility. Only he would venture to remind the King that something was due to those who had endured and risked so much for him, and that some measures should be taken for securing their lives and properties when no longer allowed arms to defend them.

The King bade him accept the terms offered him. "The most sensible part of my misfortunes," he wrote, "is to see my friends in distress, and not to be able to help them. And of this kind you are the chief. Wherefore, according to that real freedom and friendship which is between us, as I cannot absolutely command you to accept of unhandsome conditions, so I must tell you that I believe your refusal will put you in a far worse estate than your compliance will." If Montrose refused he was warned that he must do so on his own responsibility. The King could no longer avow him.

The terms were better than might have been expected Middleton, who conducted the negotiations, had no wish to press too hard on a brave enemy. All Montrose's followers were to go free in life and lands, save one whose estates had been already made prize of and could not be reclaimed. Three men only were excepted. Montrose himself, Crawford, and Hurry (who had changed sides again after his defeat at Auldearn) were to leave the kingdom by the first of September in a vessel provided by the Estates. After that day their lives would be forfeit. The terms were accepted. At Rattray in Perthshire, on July 30th, Montrose called round him for the last time the survivors of that devoted band which he had led so often to victory, and had found so faithful in defeat. In the King's name he bade them farewell, and released them from the King's service. Many implored with tears to be allowed to share his fortunes whatever they might be, and swore on their knees to follow him to the world's end. But he would not suffer them to risk their hard-won pardon.

He reminded them that they were serving their King still by obeying him, and withdrew with a few chosen followers to the bare and battered halls of Old Montrose to prepare for his departure.

The danger was not yet past. The Covenanters were furious when they learned Middleton's easy terms; and Montrose soon found that, though they could not openly repudiate them, they were bent on annulling them by secret treachery. If he was found on Scottish soil after the first day of September his life would not be worth an hour's purchase. The ship provided for his voyage did not come into the port of Montrose till the last day of August, and her captain, a morose Covenanter, swore that he could not be ready to sail for another week. The exiles were not unprepared. Arrangements had been made for their transport with a Norwegian skipper lying off Stonehaven. On the morning of September 3rd he took his passengers on board and weighed anchor. In the evening the Marquis, in disguise and with a single companion, slipped into a wherry in the port of Montrose and rejoined his friends on the open sea. A few days later they were all safely landed at Bergen.

CHAPTER XI

THE LAST CAMPAIGN

Montrose knew the temper of the men who now ruled Scotland too well to share in the delusions that had brought Charles into their power. From the Scottish to the English camp would prove, he felt certain, but a short step. As clearly as we see it now, though from a different point of view, he saw that the time for compromise was past, and that on one side or the other the victory must be absolute and unconditional. But though right in his conviction that peace could only be won at the sword's point, Montrose did not recognise that the power of the sword had passed for ever from the King. He even flattered himself that the tide was on the turn at the very moment when he had been ordered to lay down his arms, and that a few weeks would have seen all the Royalists in Scotland united as one man to rescue their sovereign from the cruel and treacherous hands into which he had fallen. It was a delusion as complete as the delusion of Charles. He might, indeed, have continued a desultory campaign among the mountains so long as he remained alive and free; he might have indulged the King with another Kilsyth, or the Macdonalds with another Inverlochy; but no man living,

not Oliver himself, could have succeeded where Montrose had failed. Statesman and soldier had alike been powerless to persuade or compel those unstable chiefs and their wild followers to the order, discipline, and concord necessary to ensure success in all military operations. In another generation another Graham had to face the same problem; but Dundee, more fortunate than his kinsman, was saved from the same failure by a glorious death on the field of battle.

And yet the course of Scottish affairs during the next two years seems at first to suggest that the genius of Montrose might have guided them to different issues. The jealousy and irresolution of Huntly must always have paralysed every effort that he might permit to assist him. But the strange outburst of popular feeling which culminated in the abortive enterprise known as Hamilton's Engagement, might under a vigorous and skilful leader have at least saved the King's life. There was no such leader then in Scotland save Montrose alone. Yet the certainty of victory under Montrose would never have tempted the men who cheerfully followed Hamilton to inevitable defeat. It may be true that Lanark professed himself willing to serve under Montrose in the capacity even of a sergeant; but the words, if sincere, were not spoken till after the annihilation of his party, when he was himself a fugitive and his brother a prisoner. At the time when Hamilton dared to make a stand against the tyranny of Argyll, Montrose, outside the little circle of his own friends and followers, was the object of general aversion to all Scotland. Royalists like Huntly and trimmers like Traquair were jealous of him. The extreme Covenanters, headed by Argyll and includ-

ing the large majority of the clergy, hated him with the deadly hatred that only fear can inspire. By the more moderate Presbyterians, who now called themselves Royalist, he was distrusted as a renegade from the Covenant and the champion, as they conceived him, of Episcopacy. Nor did they even call their cause the same. The restoration of the monarchy was their rallying cry as it had been his; but while they were arming against an English foe, his victories had been won against his own countrymen. The cruelties practised in the name of the Covenant had excited no indignation; for they had been practised in remote parts of the kingdom either on men who were regarded as little better than wild beasts, or on men who were fighting against the sacred cause of religion and liberty. Even the butchery after Philiphaugh was but the just vengeance of God. But thousands of houses had been left desolate and thousands of innocent lives lost to gratify the vain and furious ambition of Montrose. Such in times of disorder will always be the reasoning of the stronger side. It is possible, indeed, that the enthusiasm of these new Royalists was in some degree due to the feeling that it would not be forced to submit to the dictation of a man whose ways were not theirs. Only among the Highlanders could Montrose have found allies, and among their mountains was his only battle-ground. They knew nothing of Kirk or Covenant, of Presbyterian or Independent. The men of Macdonald bore no grudge against the destroyer of the Campbells; the men of Athole would have heard without a murmur that every Mackenzie had been put to the sword from Kintail to Loch Broom. They did

not care, probably the majority did not know, for what they had been marching, plundering, and fighting from Aberdeen to Inveraray. They knew only that they were following a captain who led them always to revenge and booty. But in the Lowlands Montrose had no party, and to the Lowlands his allies would not follow him. It is a hard thing to say, but it is the plain truth, that all his brilliant exploits, his dauntless courage, his ardent and unselfish devotion to a noble, if mistaken, ideal had proved of no real service to his master. Had Strafford lived to join hands with Montrose the history of the Great Rebellion might have been differently written. But Montrose stood alone, the champion of a lost cause, the martyr of an impossible loyalty. All the circumstances of the time were against him, its spirit and its temper, its ideals and its convictions. At the moment when he was ordered to disband his forces, Montrose was the King's most dangerous ally.

The scene was now shifted from the Highlands of Scotland to the French capital, but the play was the same. Here Montrose had expected to find the promised instructions from the King and the necessary credentials, but if they ever reached Paris they never came into his hands. His plan for renewing the war had been already submitted to the Queen, and had received her gracious approval. But fair words were all he was to get from Henrietta Maria. Help she would not, or could not give. Money was scarce among the exiles; the Queen was extravagant and her courtiers greedy. She did nothing without the advice of Jermyn, and the advice of the favourite was never given against his own interests. He kept the purse, and would allow no strange fingers

in it. Not a pistole could be spared from the maintenance and amusements of the little household for the wild schemes of an enthusiast who could no longer be useful and might prove troublesome. At such a court Montrose could not be welcome. Nor does his own behaviour seem to have been altogether judicious. He was accused of setting too high a claim on his past services, of a manner unbecoming a subject in the presence of his Queen; and the publication of Wishart's narrative of his exploits, which might indeed have been postponed to a more favourable time, is said to have been seriously resented, as likely to offend the Presbyterian party to whom the Royalists were now turning for help. So ran the gossip of the time, perhaps not entirely without reason. Montrose had always worn his heart upon his sleeve. For the King's sake he was ready to undergo every hardship, to submit to every indignity. But it was not in his nature to waive what he considered his just claims before men who had sat idle while he fought, and now rejected him when he had failed. He may well have been galled to see these proud carpet-knights preferred to those who had borne the burden and heat of the day, to find himself and his faithful followers slighted and in want, while money was freely lavished on the Queen's French servants and English favourites.

But though Montrose won no honour among his own countrymen, his pride might have been soothed by the admiration he excited elsewhere. He was the first person whom visitors to Paris desired to see. De Retz begged for the honour of an interview, praised him everywhere, and introduced him to Mazarin. The

Cardinal at once offered him high employment and liberal pay, and promised more. But Montrose had no taste for the French service, nor belief in the Cardinal's promises. He thought that he might serve both his King and himself better at the Austrian Court. In the spring of 1648, after one more attempt to gain the Queen to his side, and finding her now pledged to the Presbyterian alliance, he left Paris and, travelling through Switzerland and the Tyrol, came to the Emperor at Prague.

Ferdinand received him graciously, conferred on him the baton of a field-marshal, and lent a ready ear to his plans. Montrose was commissioned to levy regiments for his King in Flanders, and furnished with letters of recommendation to the Emperor's brother Leopold, Governor of the Spanish Netherlands. His reception by the Archduke, whom he found at Tournay, was no less gracious; but the crushing defeat inflicted by Condé on the Imperial forces at Lens made any active aid from this quarter impossible, and Montrose went on to join his friends at Brussels.

The Prince of Wales had now broken from the irksome bondage of his mother and Jermyn, and was settled at the Hague with Sir Edward Hyde for his Chancellor. There, too, were his brother the Duke of York, and his aunt Elizabeth of Bohemia, the gifted and unfortunate Queen of Hearts, with her son Prince Rupert. With the latter Montrose at once opened a correspondence. Rupert answered cordially, but his new duties as Admiral of the Fleet left him, he said, no present leisure for an interview. At the Hague, as at Paris, Montrose had his enemies. One friend,

indeed, supported him with all the ardour of a brave and generous woman. Between the nature of Elizabeth of Bohemia and the nature of Montrose there was much in common, and the warm sympathy that sprang up between these two noble spirits forms the one pleasant incident of this dark and miserable time.[1] But the rest, though more gracious than their countrymen in Paris, still held aloof. The complete and ignominious failure of Hamilton's Engagement had poured a fresh body of exiles into Holland, who persisted in assuring the Prince that only through Presbyterian Scotland could salvation come, and in warning him against the employment of a man so universally detested as Montrose. Charles was, on one side at least, the true son of his father. He was determined to keep friends with both parties, and to commit himself to neither. But for the present it was clearly not his interest to offend the Presbyterians, who had the advantage of numbers and were moreover on the spot. Hyde was therefore commissioned to hold a secret interview with Montrose, and was on the point of leaving the Hague for that purpose, when a fresh and terrible turn was given to affairs by the news of the King's execution.

Wishart tells us that on the receipt of the intelligence Montrose fell down in a swoon. On recovering he broke

[1] See the correspondence printed in *Memoirs of Montrose*, vol. ii. chap. xxxiv., and *Memoirs of the Electress Sophia of Hanover*. If the latter is to be believed Montrose was a suitor for the hand of her sister, the Princess Louise, who afterwards retired into a nunnery. But there is no hint of this in the Queen's letters, nor in any other contemporary authority. Nor is it likely that Montrose at the great crisis of his life should have found either leisure or inclination to indulge in dreams of matrimony.

into passionate exclamations of grief, declaring that there was nothing now left for him in life. His chaplain, in the spirit rather of the Cavalier than the clergyman, reminded him that vengeance was still left, and that the murdered King's son still lived. "It is so," answered Montrose; "and therefore I swear before God, angels, and men, that I will dedicate the remainder of my life to avenging the death of the royal martyr, and re-establishing his son upon his father's throne." He then retired to his room, and would see no one for two days. On the third morning, Wishart, being admitted, found that the Marquis had embodied his vow in the following lines, which may be admired for their passion if not for their elegance:

> Great, Good, and Just, could I but rate
> My grief with thy too rigid fate,
> I'd weep the world in such a strain
> As it should deluge once again;
> But since thy loud-tongued blood demands supplies
> More from Briareus' hands than Argus' eyes,
> I'll sing thine obsequies with trumpet-sounds,
> And write thine epitaph in blood and wounds.

A new element was now added to the factions which seethed round the little Court at the Hague. Charles the Second had been proclaimed in Edinburgh immediately on the news of his father's death, and commissioners now arrived from the Estates to dictate to him, whom they had just acknowledged as their King, the sole conditions under which he could be allowed to enter his kingdom. The Estates meant Argyll; the chief commissioners were his sworn friends, Cassillis and Robert Baillie; the terms they offered were those the late King

had lost his life by refusing. The moderate Presbyterians, the survivors of the Engagement, were represented by Lanark and Lauderdale. As they were now outcasts equally with Montrose, it might have been thought that they would make common cause with him against the common enemy. The King used all his courtliest arts to effect a reconciliation which might give him the power of dictating instead of accepting terms; but his arguments and persuasions were alike vain. Sworn foes on all other points, Engagers and Covenanters were at one in their denunciation of the bloody murderer James Graham. Among the former the bitterest was Lauderdale, whose name was destined to become a byword throughout Scotland for brutality. Hyde attempted to reason with him. He was told that it was in the nature of such a war as had lately raged in Scotland to give no quarter on either side; he was reminded that Montrose had never been guilty of such deliberate cruelties as his adversaries had freely perpetrated, that he had taken no man's life in cold blood, nor ever broken his faith with a prisoner. That Hyde spoke truth Lauderdale could not deny, but the truth mattered nothing. He swore passionately that, greatly as he desired the King's restoration, he would rather that it should never be effected, than effected with the help of this cruel and inhuman James Graham. How much of this indignation was sincere, and how much assumed as a cloak for the intrigues of faction, it would be hard to say. That there was a deep and widespread feeling in Scotland against Montrose is certain; but it is difficult to believe that pity for human suffering can at any time have strongly moved such a man as Lauder-

dale. The rest of the party followed his lead. They would not meet Montrose in council; they would not stay in the royal presence when he came into it; they desired the King not to permit Wishart to preach before him, on the ostensible grounds that he, like Montrose, was under the ban of the Kirk, but in reality because he was Montrose's chaplain and had written a narrative of his exploits. This foolish and insolent violence had the natural effect. Charles turned to Montrose, and frankly asked for his advice on the commissioners' proposals. It was as frankly given. The King was warned that his hereditary right of succession was being changed for "a conditional election of *ans* and *ifs*," which must inevitably leave him a mere tool in the hands of Argyll and the Kirk; that to sign their Solemn League and Covenant would be to condemn his father's memory by countenancing the origin of the rebellion that had cost him his kingdom and life. He was reminded that the very men who had proclaimed him King were even now slandering, persecuting, and murdering his faithful subjects whose only crime was loyalty to the Throne. Finally he was recommended to be resolute and bold, and to trust the justice of his cause to God. The disease was gone too far for gentle remedies; in vigorous and active measures lay the only human means of success. And such measures Montrose was ready to undertake so soon as the King should sanction them. The suspicious nature of that loyalty which shouted *God save the King!* while it struck at the King's most faithful subjects was an argument that came home. The violent language used against Montrose added fresh point to it every day; and the same ship that brought the commissioners

to the Hague brought also the news of Huntly's death. His brother-in-law Argyll had sent him to the scaffold, pathetically lamenting with his last breath that he had done so little in the cause for which he suffered.

It was the misfortune of Montrose to serve two masters who could never be trusted. As the father had been, so was the son. Charles knew that part of this advice was good; that if he accepted the conditions of the Estates he could be a king only in name; and he must have had a shrewd suspicion that, while Cromwell was master in England, he would not long even in name be king in Scotland. That he believed at this time in the chance of vigorous action is not impossible. The infatuation of exiles is proverbial, and there were undoubtedly others besides Montrose who shared his views. It would be unjust therefore to brand Charles with the deliberate treachery of sending a brave man to inevitable death. But he could not resist the attractions of that double game which had led his father to the block. If Montrose succeeded, Charles would be free for ever from the patronage of Kirk and Covenant; if he failed, these unwelcome allies might still be left to fall back upon. The terms of the Estates were therefore declined, but in such a way as to leave an opening for future negotiations; and a commission was issued appointing the Marquis of Montrose Lieutenant-Governor of Scotland and Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Forces, and at the same time Ambassador-Extraordinary to solicit aid from the Northern Courts in the name of the King of England.

Montrose at once set to work. Though the Powers on whose help he relied were more generous in compli-

ments and promises than in substantial aid, he contrived by the end of August to despatch a small force, mostly Germans and Danes, under the Earl of Kinnoull, to the Orkneys. He had chosen these islands for the place of muster, partly because they belonged to the Earl of Morton, Kinnoull's uncle, who was believed to be well affected, and partly because he thought that the terror of his name might not have penetrated to that remote part of the kingdom. Kinnoull was ordered to establish his men at Kirkwall, and to occupy himself in levying and drilling the islanders till his chief joined him at the end of the year.

But the hand of fate was against this wild venture from the first. Morton and Kinnoull were both dead of a fever within a few weeks after they had met at Kirkwall. Sir James Douglas, Morton's brother, was sent to Denmark with a message to Montrose urging his immediate coming to Scotland. He need not wait to bring an army with him; his own presence in the country would at once raise twenty thousand men for the King's service. Kinnoull had found time, before the fatal sickness seized him, to announce his safe arrival, and to assure his chief that he was "gaped after with that expectation that the Jews look after their Messiah." All agreed that Scotland was weary of the bondage of the Covenant, and impatient for a deliverer. But Montrose had been advised that despatches were on their way from the King in Jersey, and had no choice but to wait for them. It were better for the reputation of Charles that those despatches had never been written. They contained, indeed, the George and riband of the Garter, with many flattering words; but they contained

also words which, written on the eve of the fatal conference of Breda, and read, as we now read them, by the light of its results, convict the King, if not of deliberate treachery, at least of a cruel disregard of his general's honour and life. They told him of the reopened negotiations with the Covenant and of the approaching conference: they urged him to instant and vigorous action; and they assured him that nothing should be conceded on his sovereign's part which could offer the least impediment to his proceedings, or the least diminution of his authority. And all the while Charles knew well that the one inevitable condition, whatever else might be taken or left, without which no basis of an understanding with the Covenant was possible, must be the dismissal of James Graham from his service. Elizabeth of Bohemia, who knew her nephew's disposition too well, had always foreseen this risk. "I pray God keep the King in his constancy to you and his other true friends and servants," she had written to Montrose; and through all her letters to him ran the half-concealed warning that more danger was to be expected from this quarter than from his open foes. But Montrose, if he had ever shared the Queen's fears or remembered them now, had no eyes for any part of this cruel letter but that which counselled instant action. He had already, in default of his own presence, despatched another and much larger force to the Orkneys under Kinnoull's brother William Hay, who had now succeeded to the title. But again the fates were adverse. A violent storm arose on the passage; the greater part of the little fleet went down at sea, or was dashed to pieces on those rugged coasts; out of twelve hundred men only two

hundred, with a few field-pieces, came safe to land. Montrose himself did not reach Kirkwall till the end of March, accompanied by many of his old officers and a small but eager body of gentlemen volunteers.

It is idle to say that the delay was fatal to the success of an enterprise which could never in any circumstances have succeeded. But it was fatal to the continuance of that feeling which had prompted the letter of Kinnoull and the message of Douglas. The feeling had never indeed, even since the execution of Charles, been such or so widespread as they persuaded themselves with the exaggeration in all ages characteristic of the supporters of a lost cause. But through the greater part of the year 1649 the courage and hopes of the ultra-Royalists or Cavalier party in Scotland undoubtedly stood higher than at any time since the days immediately following the battle of Kilsyth. A rising of the Mackenzies under Pluscardine, Seaforth's brother, had indeed been easily suppressed in the spring; but it showed that the flame once kindled by Montrose was not yet wholly dead. Along with this reviving loyalty, though separate from it, was a strong and growing dislike, even among those who had hitherto held aloof from the Engagers, against the tyranny of the extreme Covenanters, the men of the Solemn League, who were led by Argyll. The moderate Presbyterians who shared this dislike would have welcomed the restoration of the young King as gladly as the Cavaliers; but they were not prepared to welcome him on the same terms. It was the misfortune of the Cavaliers to confound this partial and calculating sentiment with their own unconditional loyalty; and of this mistake Montrose was the

victim. It was a mistake of which Argyll was not slow to take advantage. His emissaries proclaimed everywhere that the desired restoration was to be accomplished, not by the brutal violence of the excommunicated traitor James Graham at the head of an army of foreign mercenaries and Highland savages, but by the peaceful and ready consent of the exiled King to the wishes of his loving subjects. Argyll had not been deceived in his estimate of Charles. When the conference met at Breda the King promised everything demanded of him. Montrose was given up with the rest. He was publicly ordered to lay down his arms, to disband his forces, to withdraw from the kingdom. He was told that the King would not forget his interests when in a position to remember them. At the same time the bearer of this cruel and unkingly order was privately instructed, with the characteristic duplicity of these unhappy Stuarts, to ascertain Montrose's strength before delivering it, and to withhold it if he should be found sufficiently strong to enable Charles to break his word with the Covenant when once safe in Scotland. These orders never reached Montrose; they were not indeed written till some days after his defeat and capture. When he landed at the head of his army in Scotland he was still acting in obedience to the King's commands.[1] But the mischief had been done. The

[1] Napier has printed all these letters and instructions from the Wigton Papers, *Memoirs of Montrose*, ii. 748-768. It is worth while to note the dates. The despatch enclosing the Garter and urging Montrose "to proceed vigorously and effectually" was dated from Jersey, January 12th (old style), 1650. Montrose was in Scotland on April 14th. He was defeated on April 27th. The despatch ordering him to disband his forces was dated from Breda on May

declaration which he published immediately on landing was burned by the common hangman at the cross in Edinburgh. A counter-declaration was issued denouncing him in terms of the most scurrilous abuse, and calling upon all in whom the fear of their God, duty to their King, and love for their country, were not utterly extinguished, to aid in bringing this traitor to justice. Every pulpit in Scotland thundered curses on his head. Those who dared to speak a good word for him were flung into prison. From one end of the country to the other he was held up to execration as a wretch abhorred of God and man.

It is improbable that Montrose had ever allowed himself to reflect on the desperate hazard of his venture. He had never been apt to calculate the chances against him, and he was not likely to do so now. That he can have felt confident or even hopeful of success seems incredible to

10th; it reached Leith on May 18th, the day on which Montrose was brought a prisoner to Edinburgh. On May 25th, four days after his execution, a letter was read in Parliament from the King, dated May 12th, at Breda, "showing that he was heartily sorry that James Graham had invaded this kingdom, and how he had discharged him from doing the same, and earnestly desires the Estates of Parliament to do himself that justice as not to believe that he was accessory to that invasion in the least degree."—Balfour's *Annals*, iv. 24. Argyll was conscious throughout of the double part the King was playing, but was of course careful to keep it secret. It is not agreeable to Englishmen to contrast the behaviour of Charles with that of the young French King. Among the Montrose archives is a letter addressed to the Scottish Parliament by Lewis, acting under the advice of the Queen Regent and prompted by the Cardinal de Retz, in which mercy is asked for their prisoner "seeing he hath done no more than devote himself in a most generous spirit to his paramount duty in fulfilling the commands of the King, his sovereign lord and yours." But Montrose was dead before the letter was sent.

us. In his little army were indeed some stout soldiers, Danes and Germans, who, like all mercenaries, could be trusted to sell their lives dearly; but at least one-half was composed of raw Orkney men, unused to arms and with little heart for a cause they can hardly have understood. Hurry and some of his old officers were still with him; and among the gentlemen volunteers were the Earl of Kinnoull, Viscount Frendraught, Sir James Douglas (Morton's brother), Sir William Hay of Dalgetty, Colonel James Hay of Naughton, Drummond of Balloch, Menzies of Pitsfoddels, Ogilvy of Powrie. His only cavalry consisted of the horses which carried himself, his principal officers, and some of the volunteers. The whole force did not exceed fifteen hundred men with a few brass field-pieces. He hoped indeed to find allies as he advanced, especially among the Mackenzies, whose chief, the vacillating Seaforth, though he preferred to stay by the King's side, had sanctioned a rising of his clan. But past experience can hardly have encouraged him to count much on such hopes. On the other hand, he knew that his old antagonist, David Leslie, was arrayed against him, and that though the Scottish army had been nominally disbanded it had only been quartered about the country ready for muster at a day's notice. Yet the orders issued to his officers were as firm and confident as ever. They are such, indeed, as almost to suggest a doubt whether his mind was able to realise the full gravity of his position. We read in them of life-guards and regiments and squadrons, as though he had the full complement of a regular army at his disposal. The truth is, that his ardent and romantic imagination, which had always seemed to

belong rather to some knight-errant of the Middle Ages than to a man of the modern world, was now exalted to a height of enthusiasm whence all things looked possible. He conceived himself to stand before the eyes of Europe as the peculiar champion of fallen and insulted monarchy. Resolute as he was to obey his sovereign's commands in all matters of life and death, the thought of avenging the father was probably even nearer his heart than the thought of restoring the son. The standards he had caused to be prepared for his expedition indicate the spirit in which it was undertaken. The royal banner displayed a bleeding head upon a black ground. On his own, wrought of white damask, were embroidered two rocks divided by a deep chasm; on the top of one a lion crouched for the spring, and beneath was the motto, *Nil Medium*. It was his favourite boast:

> He either fears his fate too much,
> Or his deserts are small,
> That dares not put it to the touch,
> To gain or lose it all.

The spirit of devotion to a cause, a creed, or a principle, which counts no cost, knows no fear, and will brook no compromise, has always been called by those who cannot understand it, and by those who dislike its object, the spirit of fanaticism. It can take many shapes, from Christian meekness and heroic valour to uncouth extravagance and savage ferocity. It inspired alike the martyrs of the early Church, the warriors of the Crusades, the priests of the Inquisition, and the troopers of Cromwell. Such was the spirit that now led Montrose to his doom.

In the second week of April he broke up his camp at

Kirkwall and crossed to the mainland. His landing was effected at a point on the north-eastern extremity of Caithness, where tradition still preserves the memory of John o' Groat's House. He had already despatched a party of men to seize and garrison the strong castle of Dunbeath in order to secure his retreat, and with his little force now reduced to twelve hundred men he moved slowly south. In the shires of Caithness, Sutherland, and Ross he had expected to find willing recruits among men who had known nothing of the horrors of the last campaign, and he supposed that the whole array of the Mackenzies would be marching to meet him under the gallant Pluscardine. He was grievously disappointed in both hopes. His conciliatory letter to the Sheriff of Caithness produced no response, and as he advanced the inhabitants fled everywhere in terror before him. He crossed the Ord into Sutherlandshire to meet the same reception. When he reached Invercarron at the head of the Firth of Dornoch, he had not been joined by a single ally.

Meanwhile the Earl of Sutherland had mustered his vassals. He did not dare to give battle, but falling back before Montrose intercepted all communications from the south. At the first news of war Colonel Strachan, a Covenanter of the straitest sect, who had distinguished himself in the previous year by his vigorous suppression of the Mackenzies, had been sent north with a strong body of cavalry, while Leslie himself made all haste to his support with three thousand foot. When Strachan and Sutherland met, it was agreed to attack at once. The latter was sent round with his own men to secure the passes into the hills, while Strachan with his cavalry

moved up the south side of the Firth upon the royal camp.

It was Saturday, April 27th. Montrose had heard of the advance, but his scouts had seen only a single weak troop of horse. Strachan had divided his force into three divisions; one he led straight forward upon the enemy, the others he kept out of sight among the wooded and broken ground on either side of his main advance. Montrose was deceived. He sent his few horse forward under Hurry, and drew up his foot on a piece of flat exposed ground at the head of the Firth. It was Philiphaugh over again. The enemy were upon him before he was aware of their strength. He at once ordered his foot to retreat to a rough and wooded hill at the rear of their position. Before they could reach it the cavalry was among them. The wretched islanders fled without firing a shot. The Germans fought bravely, but were ridden down right and left by the troopers; within two hours they were all killed, taken prisoners, or drowned in flight across the Firth. The rout was complete. Douglas, Ogilvy, Menzies (who bore the royal standard), were dead; Hurry and most of the surviving officers were prisoners. Wounded and dismounted Montrose still fought on for life or death, when young Frendraught, himself covered with wounds, pressed to his side with the offer of his own horse. It was little matter what became of him, said the gallant lad, so long as his Majesty's general was safe. Montrose leaped into the saddle, and followed by Kinnoull and a few others galloped off to the hills. Frendraught surrendered, and was committed to the care of his uncle Sutherland at Dunrobin. The pursuit was maintained

till dark, and for many days afterwards the country people hunted out and slew the unfortunate Orkneymen till it was said that there was not a family in the islands which had not to mourn a son or a brother. Within the present century the place of slaughter was popularly known by a Gaelic name signifying the Rock of Lamentation.

The little band of fugitives soon separated. There was no safety in numbers, and the ground was unfit for horsemen. Montrose dismounted, threw away his cloak, star, and sword, exchanged clothes with a peasant, and, accompanied only by Kinnoull and an Orkney gentleman named Sinclair, struck off into the heart of the mountainous wilderness that forms the western part of Sutherlandshire. His design was to make for his garrison in Caithness, whence, should the disaster prove irretrievable, he might escape to the Continent. But neither he nor his companions knew the country. For two days and nights they wandered aimlessly up the Oikel river without food or shelter. On the third day Kinnoull's strength failed him, and he lay down to die. His companions must have shared the same fate, had they not come at evening to a little cottage where they were supplied with bread and milk. Through the night and the next day they pressed on, ignorant of their course, but supposing at least that they were leaving their enemies behind them. They were in truth heading straight for the toils. The direction of their flight had been betrayed by the discovery of Montrose's star and sword, and word sent into Assynt to be on the watch, with promise of reward to whomsoever should take James Graham alive. The fugitives were discovered in

the last extremity of hunger and brought to the Laird's house at Ardvreck. The Macleods of Assynt had long been followers of the Earls of Sutherland with whose family they were connected by marriage, and Neil Macleod, the present Laird, had been recently appointed the Earl's Deputy-Sheriff of that district. From such a man at such a time a fugitive Royalist with a price upon his head had little to hope for. Montrose tried at first to buy his captor's favour, then, finding this useless, prayed at least for death rather than to be delivered alive into his enemies' hands. To prayers and bribes Macleod was alike inexorable. The great news was at once despatched to Leslie, who hurried north with a strong body of soldiers to secure the prize. Argyll had won the last move in the deadly game; Montrose was the prisoner of the Covenant.[1]

[1] I cannot find any good authority for the popular tradition that has branded Macleod with the treachery of betraying an old friend and companion-in-arms. After the Restoration, when the act of his having delivered an officer holding the royal commission over to a usurping power would of course be called treasonable, he was twice tried on this indictment; first before the Scottish Parliament, when, after four years' imprisonment, he was released by order of the King under an Act of Indemnity; a second time at Law, when he was acquitted of this and other treasonable charges. In Nichol's *Diary of Transactions in Scotland*, the father is said to have been out with Montrose; but neither in Gordon's *History of the Earldom of Sutherland* (where the story of the capture is told by one who knew the Laird) nor in Mackenzie's *History of the Macleods* is there a trace of any Macleod of this line having been in arms for the King during the war. On the contrary, the evidence of both books, such as it is, tends the other way, and Gordon explicitly says that Neil fought under the Earl of Sutherland for the Covenant. John Macdonald, the bard of Keppoch, composed a pathetic lament for Montrose, "the manly, mighty lion," in which Neil "of woful Assynt" and his family are not spared; but he is not accused of be-

traying a friend (*Cumha Mhontroise* in Mackenzie's *Beauties of Gaelic Poetry*, for a translation of which I am obliged to Mr. Alexander Nicolson, Advocate, of Edinburgh ; according to the bard three-fourths of the meal, which formed a part of the reward, was found to be sour). In the *Old Statistical Account of Scotland* it is alleged that Neil was on the march to join Montrose in Caithness, that the fugitive was brought to his house during his absence, and that the traitor was (presumedly) his wife, a sister of Monro of Lamlair one of Strachan's officers. This story (first told in 1792 by the minister of Kincardine) is, however, directly at variance with Gordon's, and it was proved moreover before Parliament that Neil had received the promised reward. On the whole evidence it seems hard to suppose that Macleod acted otherwise than any Covenanter in his situation would at that time have acted towards the man whom he had been taught to regard as the most dangerous enemy of his country.

CHAPTER XII

THE END

And now for Montrose the end had come, the end to all the high ambitions, the wild dreams, the long struggle. The time of delusion was for ever past; nothing was left but the bare and terrible reality. Still Leslie was a brave soldier, and his fallen enemy might at least have hoped to be spared in his hands from insult. He was spared from no insult that the savage exultation of his foes could desire. For six years they had fled before his face and trembled at his name; that long debt of terror and humiliation was now to be amply repaid. Leslie was the soldier of the Covenant, and the orders of the Covenant were strict to leave nothing undone that might add a sting to the bitterness of death. In a fever from his still undressed wounds, clad in the mean peasant's garb in which he had been taken, with a pad of straw for saddle and a bridle of rope, Montrose was set on the back of a ragged Highland pony, with his feet tied beneath its belly, and led as in a triumphal procession through all the chief towns of the North. Wherever he passed the people were incited by the ministers of the Kirk to rail and hoot at their once

terrible enemy. At Inverness, where the gloomy pageant was increased by the prisoners from Invercarron, the women came out to curse him for the ruin he had wrought. At Keith he was compelled to listen to a long and violent sermon on the text, "And Samuel said, As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women." Yet there were some, even among the clergymen, whom this spectacle of fallen greatness moved to gentler feelings; and it should at least be remembered to Leslie's credit that those who were not ashamed or afraid to own their friendship for his prisoner were allowed free access to him. It is remarkable that at Dundee, which had suffered so much from his soldiers, he was received with general expressions of pity; and here Leslie was persuaded to allow him to exchange the filthy rags in which he had hitherto been paraded for clothes more becoming his quality.[1] But the compassion of friends and the triumph of foes, pain and pity and scorn, were endured with the same equanimity. "All the way," wrote an eye-witness of the sorry march, "the Marquis never altered his countenance; but, with a majesty and state becoming him, kept a countenance high." Even the sight of his two

[1] In the *Memory of the Somervilles* Montrose is said to have very nearly effected his escape through the help of the Lady of Grange, at whose house, near Dundee, he was lodged for a night. The story is mentioned nowhere else—not even in the minute account of the journey written by an eye-witness, the Rev. James Fraser, chaplain to Lord Lovat, from which and from an account by another eye-witness (printed from the Wigton Manuscripts for the Maitland Club), these details are taken. Napier accepted it at first, but eventually rejected it on grounds which seem to me sufficient (*Memoirs of Montrose*, ii. ch. 38 and 39).

youngest children, who were brought to take leave of him at Kinnaird Castle, could not shake his composure.

Meanwhile great preparations were being made in Edinburgh. The glorious news had thrown the Parliament and the Kirk into transports of delight. One thousand pounds and a chain of gold with a diamond clasp were at once voted to Strachan; the city bells were rung, bonfires lit, and a public thanksgiving decreed throughout the country. Macleod was rewarded partly in money and partly, it is said, by four hundred bolls of meal; he was also appointed by Sutherland captain of the garrison of Strathnaver. Of the prisoner's sentence there could be no question. The attainder passed on him in 1644 had never been repealed, and without the formality of a trial Parliament, with one voice, pronounced for death. But the manner of his death must be signal; and a committee was appointed to prepare plans for the ceremony as if for some national rejoicing.

At four on the afternoon of May 10th, Montrose was brought from Leith to the Water Gate at Holyrood, and handed over by the soldiers to the civil power. The orders of Parliament were read to him by the provost, in his robes of state, at the head of the chief magistrates of the city. He answered that he was ready to submit to them, regretting only to think that his master, whose commission he bore, should be dishonoured through him. The cruel pageant then began. Hurry, with the rest of the prisoners from Invercarron, came first, walking two and two in chains. A cart followed, driven by the common hangman of the city in the hideous livery of his office. In the cart was a high chair, and on the chair sat Montrose, bareheaded and tightly bound. The long

ascent of the Canongate was crowded with people, mostly of the lowest class, whose minds had been artfully inflamed by the fierce eloquence of the pulpits to greet the enemy of their country and religion in a manner worthy of his crimes and the occasion. It was even secretly hoped that their greetings might not be confined to empty execration, and the prisoner's hands had been drawn behind his back that he might not defend his face. But the sad and shameful sight turned these rough hearts to pity. Many were even moved to tears to see with what serene and lofty composure this man, who had once known the height of glory, could now endure the extremity of disgrace. From the Water Gate to the Nether Bow only one voice was raised in scorn; the voice of a woman, of Jean, Countess of Haddington, the daughter of Huntly, the sister of Gordon. The wretched creature is even said to have spat upon her dead brother's friend as the cart passed below the balcony in which she sat. In the same balcony was Argyll, with a party of guests met to celebrate the marriage of his son Lorne to a daughter of the Earl of Moray. Either by accident or design the cart was halted at this point, and Montrose looked up. As his eyes met those of Argyll, the latter was seen to turn pale and shrink back from the window. An angry murmur rose from the crowd, and an English voice was heard to cry that Argyll might well shrink from the man he had not dared to face for seven years.[1]

[1] This disgraceful scene is mentioned in more than one contemporary document; among others, though in a slightly different form, in a letter from M. de Graymond, French Resident in Edinburgh, to Cardinal Mazarin. See *Memoirs of Montrose*, ii. 77-82, and *notes*. Argyll always maintained that he had refused to take any part in pronouncing sentence on Montrose.

So dense was the crowd and so slow the pace of the procession that it was seven o'clock before the Tolbooth was reached. As the prisoner passed through the Nether Bow Port and entered within the city walls, the last hope that he might at least be spared the ignominious death reserved for the lowest criminals must have vanished. Before his eyes a monstrous gibbet rose to the height of thirty feet from a scaffold covered with black cloth. It rose close by the old city cross, the spot, as his memory must have recalled with peculiar bitterness, where his young and ardent enthusiasm had first displayed itself before the admiring eyes of so many who were now clamouring for his blood.

Scarcely had Montrose entered the prison when a deputation from the Parliament arrived to interrogate him. At first he refused to speak with them until he was assured that they had made their peace with the King and had warrant to examine him. Being satisfied on this point, he asked that he might be left to rest for the present. He was tired, he said, with a long journey; and "the compliment they had put upon him that day was something tedious."

But there was to be little rest for him. All through Sunday and the early hours of Monday, the ministers persecuted him, by order of the General Assembly, with a relation of his manifold misdemeanours and assurances of his certain damnation unless he would confess and receive the absolution of the Kirk. His capital offence in their eyes was his breach of the Covenant. That he stoutly denied. "The Covenant which I took," he said, "I own it and adhere to it. Bishops, I care not for them. I never intended to advance their interest. But

when the King had granted you all your desires, and you were every one sitting under his vine and under his fig-tree,—that then you should have taken a party in England by the hand, and entered into a League and Covenant with them against the King, was the thing I judged my duty to oppose to the yondmost." They told him then that, as he still persisted in his stubbornness, they had no power to remit his sentence of excommunication, and must leave him to the judgment of the Almighty, "with the fearful apprehension that what is bound on earth God will bind in Heaven." "I am very sorry," he answered, "that any actions of mine have been offensive to the Church of Scotland, and I would, with all my heart, be reconciled to the same. But since I cannot obtain it on any other terms—unless I call that my sin which I account to have been my duty—I cannot for all the reason and conscience in the world."

Shortly before noon on Monday he was summoned to hear his sentence at the bar of Parliament. He had asked for a barber to shave him, and had been refused; "I would not think but they would have allowed that to a dog," was his comment. His friends had, however, been permitted to supply him with a dress suited, as one of the spectators thought, rather to a festival than a tragedy. He entered the House in a suit of black cloth, trimmed with silver, and covered with a scarlet cloak, lined with crimson and trimmed also with silver. His stockings were of carnation silk, his garters and the rosettes of his shoes of the same colour. On his head was a beaver hat with a broad band of silver lace. When the Chancellor, Loudon, had repeated the full tale of his crimes, he asked leave to speak. Leave was granted.

Montrose stood up "in the place of delinquents," uncovered, and spoke.

"Since you have declared to me that you have agreed with the King, I look upon you as if his Majesty were sitting amongst you; and in that relation I appear with this reverence,—bareheaded. My care has been always to walk as became a good Christian and loyal subject: I did engage in the first Covenant, and was faithful to it. When I perceived some private persons, under colour of religion, intend to wring the authority from the King, and to seize on it for themselves, it was thought fit, for the clearing of honest men, that a bond should be subscribed, wherein the security of religion was sufficiently provided for. For the League, I thank God I was never in it; and so could not break it. How far religion has been advanced by it, and what sad consequences followed on it, these poor distressed kingdoms can witness. When his late Majesty had, by the blessing of God, almost subdued those rebels that rose against him in England, and that a faction of this kingdom went in to the assistance of the rebels, his Majesty gave commission to me to come into this kingdom, to make a diversion of those forces which were going from this against him. I acknowledged the command was most just, and I conceived myself bound in conscience and duty to obey it. What my carriage was in this country many of you may bear witness. Disorders in arms cannot be prevented; but they were no sooner known than punished. Never was any man's blood spilt but in battle; and even then, many thousand lives have I preserved. And I dare here avow, in the presence of God, that never a hair of Scotsman's head, that I could save,

fell to the ground. And as I came in upon his Majesty's warrant, so upon his letters did I lay aside all interests and retire. And as for my coming at this time, it was by his Majesty's just commands, in order to the accelerating the treaty betwixt him and you; his Majesty knowing that, whenever he had ended with you, I was ready to retire upon his call. I may say, that never subject acted upon more honourable grounds, nor by so lawful a power, as I did in these services. And therefore I desire you to lay aside prejudice, and consider me as a Christian, in relation to the justice of the quarrel; as a subject, in relation to my royal master's command; and as your neighbour, in relation to the many of your lives I have preserved in battle: and be not too rash; but let me be judged by the laws of God, the laws of nature and nations, and the laws of this land. If otherwise, I do here appeal from you to the righteous Judge of the world, who one day must be your judge and mine, and who always gives out righteous judgments."

The Chancellor's reply was less dignified. Among the epithets hurled at the prisoner were *infamous*, *perjured*, *treacherous*; he was the most cruel and inhuman butcher that the world had ever seen; he had destroyed the father by his boundless pride and ambition, and would, had he been suffered, have destroyed the son. Montrose was then commanded to kneel, while his sentence was read by Warriston. He was to be hanged on a gibbet at the cross of Edinburgh, with a copy of his Memoirs by Wishart and a copy of his last declaration tied by a rope about his neck; after hanging for the space of three hours, his head, hands, and legs were to

be cut off, and distributed as follows: his head was to be fixed on an iron spike on a pinnacle of the Tolbooth; one hand was to be set over the gate of Stirling, the other over the gate of Perth; one leg over the gate of Aberdeen, the other over the gate of Glasgow. If, at his death, he was penitent and released from excommunication, then the trunk of his body was to be decently buried in the churchyard of the Grey Friars; if otherwise, it was to be laid by the hangman's men under the common gallows on the Borough Moor. While this brutal sentence was read Montrose showed no sign of discomposure. Only at the end he sighed twice, and raising his head looked round the ring of relentless faces; but he spoke no word. The Doomster then, according to law, repeated the sentence, and Montrose was removed to the Tolbooth.

Scarcely had he re-entered his prison, when the ministers again attacked him. But he would argue with them no more. "I pray you, gentlemen," he said, "let me die in peace." One of his gaolers, moved to some momentary pity, asked these impertinent busybodies if nothing would satisfy them but tormenting the last hours of an unfortunate man. It was the only way, they answered, to humble his proud spirit and bring him to God.

Early the next morning, Tuesday, May 21st, he was waked by a loud noise of drums and trumpets. He asked his guards what these unusual sounds might mean, and was told that the soldiers were being mustered to arms, lest the malignants should attempt a rescue. "What!" he said, "is it possible that I, who was such a terror to these good men when alive and prosperous,

continue still so formidable to them now that I am bound for slaughter? Then I should be still more terrible to them when dead!" Even now his persecutors would not leave him in peace. As he was preparing for the last scene, Johnston of Warriston, the chief instigator, it is said, of all this barbarity, came into his cell. Montrose was dressing his hair, which he wore long, after the fashion of the Cavaliers. "Why," sneered this brutal fellow, "is James Graham so careful of his locks?" "My head is yet my own," was the answer; "I will arrange it to my taste. To-night, when it will be yours, treat it as you please."

At three in the afternoon Montrose was led out to die. The largest crowd ever assembled on the streets of Edinburgh was gathered round the place of execution; every house-top, window, and balcony was thronged with spectators. At one end of the scaffold stood the chief magistrates of the city, at the other a group of the inevitable ministers. Beside the hangman was a bench on which were arranged in ghastly order the implements of butchery. A space was kept clear round the scaffold by a strong force of soldiers. As Montrose walked down the High Street from the Tolbooth, surrounded by his guards, in the same rich dress that he had worn before the Parliament, all were struck with his calm and noble bearing. "He stepped along the street," wrote an eye-witness, "with so great state, and there appeared in his countenance so much beauty, majesty, and gravity, as amazed all the beholders. And many of his enemies did acknowledge him to be the bravest subject in the world; and in him a gallantry that graced all the crowd, more beseeming a monarch than a peer."

He mounted the steps and stood upon the scaffold. The grace granted to even the meanest criminals was denied to him; he was not allowed to address the people. But to the magistrates and others round him he thus for the last time justified himself.

"I am sorry if this manner of my end be scandalous to any good Christian here. Doth it not often happen to the righteous according to the way of the unrighteous? Doth not sometimes a just man perish in his righteousness, and a wicked man prosper in his wickedness and malice? They who know me should not disesteem me for this. Many greater than I have been dealt with in this kind. But I must not say but that all God's judgments are just. And this measure, for my private sins, I acknowledge to be just with God. I wholly submit myself to Him. But, in regard of man, I may say they are but instruments. God forgive them; and I forgive them. They have oppressed the poor, and violently perverted judgment and justice. But He that is higher than they will reward them. What I did in this kingdom was in obedience to the most just commands of my sovereign: and in his defence, in the day of his distress, against those who rose up against him. I acknowledge nothing; but fear God and honour the King, according to the commandments of God, and the just laws of nature and nations. And I have not sinned against man, but against God; and with Him there is mercy, which is the ground of my drawing near unto Him. It is objected against me by many, even good people, that I am under the censure of the Church. This is not my fault, seeing it is only for doing my duty, by obeying my Prince's most just commands, for religion,

his sacred person, and authority. Yet I am sorry they did excommunicate me; and, in that which is according to God's laws, without wronging my conscience or allegiance, I desire to be relaxed. If they will not do it, I appeal to God, who is the righteous Judge of the world, and who must, and will, I hope, be my Judge and Saviour. It is spoken of me, that I would blame the King. God forbid! For the late King, he lived a saint, and died a martyr. I pray God I may end as he did. If ever I would wish my soul in another man's stead, it should be in his. For his Majesty now living, never any people, I believe, might be more happy in a king. His commands to me were most just; and I obeyed them. He deals justly with all men. I pray God he be so dealt withal; that he be not betrayed under trust as his father was. I desire not to be mistaken; as if my carriage at this time, in relation to your ways, were stubborn. I do but follow the light of my conscience; my rule, which is seconded by the working of the Spirit of God that is within me. I thank Him I go to heaven with joy the way He paved for me. If he enable me against the fear of death, and furnish me with courage and confidence to embrace it, even in its most ugly shape, let God be glorified in my end, though it were in my damnation. Yet I say not this out of any fear or mistrust, but out of my duty to God and love to His people. I have no more to say, but that I desire your charity and prayers. And I shall pray for you all. I leave my soul to God, my service to my Prince, my good-will to my friends, my love and charity to you all. And thus briefly I have exonerated my conscience."

Once more the ministers pressed round him, proffering

the remission of his spiritual sentence if he would confess his sins against the Church and the Covenant. Once more he answered that he could not accept it on those terms, but desired their prayers. They bid him pray for himself if he would; they would make no intercession for a man who died under the ban of the Church. One of these misguided creatures did not scruple to call him a faggot of hell, which his prophetic eye could already see in flames. Montrose made no reply, but bent his head in silent prayer, covering his face with his hat and raising one hand to heaven. As the executioner then approached to tie round his neck the copies of his declaration and the memoirs of his campaigns, Montrose gave the man a few pieces of gold, saying that he was even more proud of such a collar of merit than when the King had sent him the Garter. Only when his arms were pinioned did he show any signs of displeasure; but he contented himself with asking if they had any more compliments to bestow on him, as he was anxious to lose no honour during the short time left to him on earth. He then climbed the huge ladder with a steady step and a countenance that had assumed its wonted serenity. "May God have mercy on this afflicted kingdom," he cried with a loud voice, and then moved his arms for the signal. The hangman burst into tears as he thrust him off the step, and as the body swung slowly out into the air, a universal sob of pity broke from all that vast crowd.

The inhuman sentence was carried through in all its details, and the dismembered trunk was placed in a rude shell and thrust into the common earth below the gallows on the Borough Moor. A pretty story, which there is

no reason to discredit, tells how a few nights later the grave was secretly opened, and that heroic heart removed, embalmed, and carried to Lady Napier. For the strange adventures of this precious relic, how it was lost to the family, found, and lost again, there is no room here; the curious will find them fully described in the elaborate and interesting work to which these pages already owe so much.[1]

Eleven years passed, and again a vast crowd thronged the High Street of Edinburgh to witness a different scene. The King, for whom Montrose had died, was now restored to the throne of his fathers, and had decreed the empty tribute of a public funeral for the man whom he had not dared to lift a finger or speak a word to save. The scattered remains had been previously collected, and carried amid great pomp to Holyrood. There they lay in state from January 7th, 1661, to May 11th, on which day they were placed beside the bones of his grandfather in the old cathedral church of St. Giles. No more imposing ceremony, it is said, was ever seen in Edinburgh. The streets were lined by the Train-bands, the Royal Life-Guards formed the escort. Marshalled by the heralds in their robes of office, the provost and magistrates of the City with the barons and burgesses of Parliament walked two abreast all clad in deep mourning. The coffin was carried by fourteen earls, while twelve noblemen of lesser rank held the pall. The armour worn by the dead man in battle, his field-marshal's baton, his

[1] See *Memoirs of Montrose*, ii. 814-816, and Appendix I. The carnation silk stockings, and the linen sheet in which the body was wrapped, are in the possession of Lord Napier and Ettrick.

Garter, and the other insignia of his state were borne before it by various members of his House. Behind walked the young Marquis and his brother Lord Robert, followed by the nearest relatives of the family. The long procession was closed by Middleton, now Lord High Commissioner of Scotland, representing the King, in an open mourning-coach drawn by six horses and attended by six gentlemen of quality on either side, bare-headed and also in deep mourning. Though the day broke dark and rainy, the sky cleared and the sun shone as the solemn pageant passed on its way from the palace to the cathedral, while the bells pealed from every steeple in the city. Nothing was wanting to enhance the splendour of the scene; to those who allowed themselves to reflect, nothing could have been wanting to add to its irony. The route was the same as that by which the living man had been dragged before the eyes of many now present amid brutal insults to an ignominious doom. As the coffin was lowered into the vault the Train-bands fired a volley, and the cannon thundered in answer from the Castle. In that Castle, a prisoner under sentence of death, execrated by all Scotland, lay Archibald, Marquis of Argyll.

It was left for our own generation to pay the last honours due to the memory of the illustrious dead. In the little aisle that now bears his name a lofty window, blazoned with the royal arms of Scotland and the shields of the families and clans that shared his triumphs and his fall, looks down upon the plain stone slab that for more than two hundred years alone marked the grave of Montrose. Over against the grave rises a stately shrine. Beneath an arched and fretted roof, supported

on gilded pillars, lies carved in white marble the figure of the Great Marquis, bareheaded, in full armour, with his sword upon his breast. Above the figure a Latin inscription records that this monument has been raised to the memory of James Graham, Marquis of Montrose, by his descendants and kinsmen, by the bearers of his name, and by the admirers of his lofty genius. On a tablet below are engraved the lines with which he solaced the long hours of his last night on earth :

> Scatter my ashes, strew them in the air—
> Lord, since Thou knowest where all these atoms are,
> I'm hopeful Thou'lt recover once my dust,
> And confident Thou'lt raise me with the just.[1]

[1] This memorial was erected by general subscription in 1888. Among its most active promoters was the late Mr. Graham Murray of Stenton, to whose kindly assistance this little book has been much indebted.

THE END

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